

NEW STATESMAN

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What Is Princess Margaret For?

The officials of Kensington Palace, who obviously regard their own share of public expenditure as money very well spent, are apparently 'concerned' about the image of Princess Margaret. Their anxiety is understandable. If 'time' is ever called on the royal bluff, there are all manner of equerries and retainers who will have to seek useful employment. And certainly, Princess Margaret's public life is of the kind which discredits the monarchy among just the sort of people who usually rally to it - which is to say, among snobs and hypocrites. No crack in that constituency can be tolerated for long, and there will be more head-shaking and finger-wagging to be endured while the Princess persists in her free and easy existence.

As far as that goes, there is no good reason to object. If she really prefers the company of night-club operators and minor tax-exiles to that of her official entourage, who can blame her? In other circumstances it would be laudable. But the awkward fact remains that she does receive a cool £55,000 per annum for her duties, and while she cannot actually be accused of neglecting the few that are set her, she undoubtedly creates an atmosphere where even the stoutest loyal body thinks twice before seeking her patronage. (It will, for instance, be interesting to see how long she remains the Honorary President of the Girl Guides.) This puts such a distance between her own standing and that of her sister or her nephew that it must be asked whether the Civil List needs to support her any longer.

It would all be much easier if the Royal Family chose to be treated as the rather ordinary human beings which they are. It could be said of Princess Margaret that, after all, she did give up her lover in order to appease the Church of England and the Palace and that, surely she could be left to enjoy such late-flowering romance as came her way. Unfortunately, as the rebarbative memoirs of Group Captain Townsend do not fail to make clear, she chose to hang on to her lavish allowance rather than renounce her titles. If she still insists on pelf and place then she should display more of the heart and stomach of a princess.

There has always been a favourite British method of criticising the Royal Family obliquely. This inverted sycophancy takes the form of avoiding direct attack on 'the Royals', but going instead for their 'advisers'. Now, this formula has been reversed. The redoubtable Major John Griffin, a man hitherto perfectly obscure, who sails under the improbable colours of 'Press Secretary to Princess Margaret', has been made the peg on which to hang criticism of his employer in reported speech. No doubt the lights have burned late in the precincts of Kensington Palace while the gallant major wrestles with his conscience and his duty. But when the cue for criticism comes from that quarter, and when even the most fawning Conservative papers take up the matter, then a good opportunity for reviewing the monarchy presents itself.

The socialist attitude to the institution does not just hang on the question of cost, any more than the monarchist attitude to it depends on the argument of tourist revenue. There are those who believe that an inefficient class system needs to be crowned with a dignified symbol, and those who do not. For those who persist in the belief, it is a very bad day when the symbol loses its dignity.

Really, then, this is primarily an issue for those who believe in and uphold the institution of monarchy. If they are to continue with their incantations of 'magic' and 'majesty', of pomp and circumstance and a thousand years of history, then it is up to them to keep the ancient scenery from crumbling. There is a certain point beyond which the throwing open of the grounds, the sponsorship of export drives and the donning of the motley will destroy the fragile illusion of a divinity hedging the throne. With at least one member of the House of Windsor, that point has long since been passed. In human terms it is possible to feel sympathy for Princess Margaret - but humanity is not what monarchy is about. If we are to be spared another 'open season' by the Mrs Whitehouses and Mrs Grundys of this world, she could do worse than to consider the implications of her position and then take the appropriate action.

Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

An October Election?

Visitors to Downing Street in the last few days have noticed the enormous relief of the cabinet at the defeat of the French Left. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, otherwise known by his correct title, Her Majesty's Blob from Outer Space, was particularly thrilled. David Owen, who does not trust the Eurocommunists as far as he can throw them, will, we may be sure, feel thoroughly heartened: 'Old François and I get on very well, and I've worked a lot with Georges, and of course there's my *vieux copain* Robert – *nous sommes les mieux d'amis* but *franchement*, as I said to Valéry, they had it coming. Jacques agrees with me. "Ils avaient le venant", he said. . . . As for the Prime Minister, it must be heartening to see that an electorate does sometimes settle for more of the same old poison even after 20 years of it. For this is the sort of slogan on which he will be going to the country in October.

Why October? Well, what are the alternatives? There are, it is true, certain attractions in February next year. It is thought that the economy will, barring accidents of global proportions, hold up quite well. The psephologists are encouraging, and would probably advise the old boy to hang on while living standards rise and the disasters of the past recede from the public memory. But 1979 is already rather booked up with elections. June has been fixed by Owen as the date for the European elections. The local elections are due in May. This leaves less room for manoeuvre than Callaghan would like. If it's 1979, it really has to be February. If it's February, the traditional advantage for Labour in going to the polls on a new electoral register has to be balanced against the traditional disadvantage of bad weather.

Then there is the question, can Labour hold on till next year? And the key figure here is David Steel. Steel is as always under pressure to end the pact. There are indeed members of his party who would like the pact ended now, right away, in a blaze of publicity. Ditch the budget. Ditch the remaining legislation. Climb into the cockpit and do a kamikaze nosedive into the polling-booths. Steel is reluctant to follow this advice: he wants the pact to end, but to end cleanly. Deliver the Finance Bill, with a sufficient number of Pardoe amendments to impress – well – someone. Deliver those other Bills to which Liberal support has been committed. And then say, sorry, no more pact. From now on your support will be on a day-to-day basis.

It does not follow that the end of the pact means the end of the Government. But it would be a dangerous gamble to attempt to prolong the life of the minority administration. It would seem more ineffectual as the days went by, and would

give the Tories the opportunity to adopt the slogan, 'We need a strong government.' An October election, on the other hand, allows Callaghan himself to stand as the would-be strong man. A clean end to the pact means a good opportunity for him to call for a new mandate: 'I'm sorry to have to do this, I offered the Liberals a chance to continue in partnership – a partnership which, I think you will all agree, has been particularly helpful for the stability of the country and in particular the economy. But I have here a piece of paper from Mr Steel which says "Sod Off". Now, I don't blame Mr Steel. He has his job to do. I have mine. But the time has come for a *clear decision* . . .'

October is also a convenient date from the point of view of Scotland, where, incidentally, Labour is less despairing than in the past. (They are feeling rather hopeful about the Garscadden by-election.) With the Scotland Bill on the statute book, but as yet no referendum, Labour will be able to challenge the Tories as to whether they propose to go ahead with devolution as planned. Mrs Thatcher will be in a tight spot, relying as she does now on the anti-devolution vote. It will also be possible to argue to the pro-devolutionists that an SNP vote is a wasted vote, since only Labour can deliver the goods.

Finally there is the attraction in not holding any party conferences in the autumn. No conferences. No resolutions. No compositing of resolutions. No points of order arising from the compositing of resolutions. No referrals-back arising from points of order arising from compositing of resolutions. No *Tribune* rally. No lecture from Tony Benn about the virtues of the 1945 Labour manifesto, the radicalism of Attlee, the socialism of Herbert Morrison, etcetera, etcetera. And on the other hand, no 12-year-old Tories delighting their audience with impassioned pleas for individual initiative and lower taxes. Yes, in

that way an October election comes to seem very attractive indeed.

And yet, and yet . . . However compelling the logic may seem, however the favourable circumstances may mount up, there is always the Still Small Voice factor to be taken into account. 'Wot no job?' says the Still Small Voice, 'Wot no car? Wot no Chequers? Wot no whopperoo of a salary? Wot no banquets? Wot no official visits? Wot no pumping of hands with exotic people who are shortly to be taken out and shot?' And once one listens to the Still Small Voice, the tone of the debate begins to change. One finds oneself wondering dreadfully about such trivial matters as the exact sum Lord Weidenfeld would be prepared to advance for one's useful little volume on the role of the cabinet in decision-making today. One begins to wish one had kept a diary. One begins, in short, to feel a little chilly.

It would be so foolish, would it not, to throw it all away now. Why not, one begins to think, why not throw it all away *later*? Heavens above, one begins to think, we've got plenty of time left allotted to us. Why, we've only just had a chance to find our feet. It's not fair. We've not had a fair crack of the whip. There's so much left to do. For instance there's the wealth tax – no, sorry, forget that – there's Rhodesia. We mustn't leave office until we've honoured our obligations to Rhodesia. To leave office before we've honoured our obligations to Rhodesia would be the most irresponsible betrayal of our responsibilities. Yup. No question. We must hang on, whatever the risks. *We owe it to the country.*

Many are the Still Small Voices whispering in cabinet ears – as many voices as there are careers at stake. Some of them, admittedly, must be urging October. The SSV in the Blob's ear, for instance, will be arguing thus: 'Either way, Jim's going to retire soon, retire in triumph, retire in disgrace – it makes no difference. The sooner the election, the sooner the retirement. And then, O Blob, O great and wonderful Blob, the whole thing is yours. Think of it! Jobs for the Blobs. Blobby correspondents hanging on your lips. National Blob-a-job week. *O Blob Our Help in Ages Past* thundering from the organs of the great cathedrals . . .'

And at the same time, the SSV in Callaghan's ear is saying: 'Look, Jim, we've known each other a long time. We've come a long way together. We've had our good times, and, heaven knows, we've had our bad times. But, gracious me, if I'd thought that you would allow yourself to chuck it all away when, gracious me, you've only just got it – well, I'm not sure I would have thought it worthwhile. Now I know what you always say, about going back to your farm and so on, and in many ways I sympathise with you. But what about the history books? Which looks better – James Callaghan, 1976-78, or James Callaghan, 1976-79? I ask you. And look at the Blob over there, already trying on the crown. Doesn't it make you sick? Well, I know you're a man of your own mind, and I respect that, but heaven knows, gracious me . . . Have a think about it. Take your time. An October election, yes, but what about October 1979?'

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James Walston

A Roman Hostage

The news of the kidnapping of Aldo Moro and the murder of his five-man bodyguard came at possibly the most delicate moment in the 30 years of Republican rule in Italy. Last Thursday morning he was going to the first debate of Andreotti's new Government, which was due to be the first parliamentary airing of the 'programme' which had been negotiated to end the 154-day crisis. The crime itself is quickly described. One car, with two terrorists inside, brakes sharply in front of Moro's; they jump out and kill the driver and *carabiniere* who are with the politician. They use revolvers and not machine guns for greater accuracy. At the same time other terrorists appear from behind the hedge and deal with the three policemen in the following car. One of the latter managed to fire three shots before being killed and it seems likely that at least one of the terrorists may have been wounded, since there are traces of blood on the cars which have since been found.

The reactions were swift on all sides. Within half-an-hour there were roadblocks

on all the main roads leading out of Rome and within an hour a general strike had been called in protest. Although the police insist that Moro is still within the city, that half-hour delay could have been enough for the Red Brigades to have taken him into the countryside, since the actual kidnapping took place in a northern suburb of Rome. There are a number of precedents for holding hostages in carefully constructed prisons in country farmhouses and the Red Brigades themselves have used this technique in Turin.

Late on Thursday morning the special editions were already on the streets and every television and radio station, both public and private, was dealing only with the kidnapping. That morning the first of the three cars used by the terrorists was found in a street close to where the ambush had taken place. In the afternoon there was a demonstration in Piazza S. Giovanni with more than 200,000 people but the rest of the city was completely quiet. If anything, there were fewer police sirens than normal.

In the meantime the Liberal Republican leader, La Malfa, found himself being supported by the secretary of the neo-Fascists, Almirante. La Malfa had made some unguarded remarks about the desirability of introducing strong measures to deal with terrorism and the possibility of bringing back the death penalty. Since then his fellow Republicans have tried to play down the old man's speech delivered in the heat of the moment.

On the other hand, there seems to be a general consensus among the governing parties that there is no need to introduce special legislation. It would be enough if existing laws and anti-terrorist devices were actually in use. There have been a large number of stable doors bolted since last Thursday. Why were neither of the cars given any type of protection? Why were none of the policemen wearing the bullet-proof vests with which they have been issued? Why does it come out on the following Monday that the girl who had supposedly taken part in the raid had been in a hotel in the North from the 12-16 March and that, despite being wanted by the police for the last two years, she has come in and out of the country half-a-dozen times?

That girl is called Brunhilde Petramer. Although she is Italian one of the terrorists had a strong German accent and the kidnapping itself was a carbon copy of the Schleyer kidnapping last September. When



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this somewhat specious 'evidence' is put alongside a national inferiority complex the immediate result is a foreign plot. Italy is politically the most important country in the Mediterranean.' . . . 'No Italians could have been efficient enough to have organised that type of operation.' . . . And finally on Monday the oracular answer from the examining magistrate 'That is a taboo subject', when he was asked about foreign connections.

Last Sunday the Christian Democrat paper *Il Popolo* published an editorial which spoke of 'well-proven guerrilla techniques which are being mainly used in Europe and which can easily be traced back to the Palestinian guerrillas armed and trained by the Russians'. The guerrilla 'multi-national' may or may not be true; certainly there has been, and is, cooperation between the German, Israeli and Italian Secret Services. But the unfortunate fact which seems to have escaped both the media and the politicians is that the operation was relatively simple. Once the drastic decision to annihilate the escort has been taken the kidnapping of a senior politician requires much the same equipment as a bank robbery.

It would be wrong, though, to stretch the parallel too far, if only because the counter-measures which have so far been taken are unlike anything which has been seen before. In Rome there are 24,000 policemen divided into four shifts who are going through the whole city; in fact normal criminals have

never kept so quiet. There has been a complete halt to bag-snatching, car thefts and burglaries – normally part of the daily Rome routine. The army has relieved the police from the duty of guarding motorway toll booths; all frontiers are being rigorously checked.

The other anxiety which is being kept well-hidden is the widespread sympathy towards the Red Brigades among extreme left-wing students. The remark which is most often heard is: 'They shouldn't have killed the coppers who are members of the proletariat after all, but Moro has got what he deserved.' Or even more sinister: 'Perhaps the methods are self-destructive but the aims are right.' The authors of these remarks are not members of the PCI or even the extreme Left that is already in Parliament. Both have strongly and genuinely condemned the action – but even so there are an awful lot of sympathisers around.

What in the final analysis are the aims of the Red Brigades? The communiqué which accompanied Moro's photo last Saturday expressly denied any exchange deal for Renato Curcio and the others whose Turin trial reopened noisily on Monday. The Red Brigades say that they will 'try' the president of the Christian Democrats and, given their obvious lack of scruples, the verdict is predictable. Unless, that is, the police finally show themselves as efficient as their opponents.

Rome

agreement could provide a creditable basis for a Left Government.

The Right took its chance. The Common Programme, formerly the centre of political debate, now became its target. The Left was thrown on the defensive while the government parties attacked like an opposition with the wind in its sails. The PCF's recent war with the PS has revived all the old fears about the nature of the PCF – fears which made the question of PCF participation in government all the more acute. Mitterrand was harried relentlessly with questions as to how many PCF Ministers he would have, and in which Ministries. He stonewalled, complaining that no one ever asked Barre whether he would take Chirac, his worst enemy, into his government. It was no answer and did nothing for the credibility of a possible Left government.

The Right, by contrast, was a model of smooth efficiency and solidarity. Chirac's RPR and the Giscardian UDF worked as one. Before the first ballot they had poured their fire against the PS; now they wheeled sharply and in concert into an anti-Communist campaign guaranteed to solidify their own support for the final test. They predicted – probably correctly – a 95 per cent transfer of votes either way between RPR and UDF on the second round.

The Left made a sorry contrast. Two Left Radical candidates called on their supporters to vote for the Right against the PCF. PS leaders found it impossible to contain their bitterness against the PCF for (as they saw it) having broken the Left's *dynamique unitaire*.

The Communists kept their heads. They had succeeded in limiting the PS advance on the first ballot – though at the cost of some of their own support. On the run-off they were determined to elect the maximum number of PCF deputies, garnering PS votes where they could while limiting PS gains wherever possible. *Humanité* published a list of 260 Left candidates (112 PCF and 148 PS) who might (i.e. deserved to) win – a standing invitation to PCF militants to campaign with discrimination. Party militants on both sides quietly set to work to destroy their rivals' chances whenever they could. Left unity meetings were cold and miserable affairs, with spokesmen of both parties frequently venting their criticisms of the candidate to whose colours they had ostensibly rallied. Many PS candidates, at least, were convinced that PCF militants were actually organising the faithful to vote against them or abstain. On the Right, by contrast, RPR militants turned out in force to support UDF candidates, leafleting, organising meetings and pulling the vote out.

The Right's total mobilisation plus the Left's kamikaze tactics transformed a close race into a large Right victory. The revival of anti-Communist hostilities took some striking forms – in the Paris suburbs the PCF leader, Georges Marchais, standing without opposition because all other candidates had withdrawn or been eliminated – found more than 19,000 voters had turned out to cast spoiled ballots against him. In only one Paris seat – where an obscure Socialist beat Michel Poniatowski, Giscard's former Interior Minister and right-hand man – did the Left show what it could do when it really tried. Ponia's seat had barely been

R. W. Johnson & D. B. Goldey

The End of the Affair

There is no climax like an anti-climax. Ever since 1974 France has been living through a psychodrama of growing intensity, focused on the single great question: what would happen when and if the Left came to power. Model scenarios varied from Chile, Portugal, or Prague to social democracy à l'anglaise. The crunch has now come and gone. The Right has won so heavily that the question posed is whether the Left, if it could not win now, can ever hope to win at all. For in a country where the Left is divided almost equally between Communists (PCF), and Socialists (PS), there is no Left majority without both the PCF and the Left-Centre. Their incompatibility makes such a majority almost impossible unless the PCF is willing to accept relegation to junior partner – a role, of course, it is entirely unwilling to accept.

The first ballot had not been conclusive. The fall in the PS vote from its showing in the polls removed all chance of a large Left victory, but the game was hardly over. In the 418 seats to be decided in the run-off the Left had totalled 50.1 per cent on the 1st ballot, the Right only 45.1 per cent. The Left were in a clear majority position in 57 seats and in a further 46 minority parties held the balance. A straight computer projection from these results showed the Left gaining

an overall majority of not less than ten.

What, then, cost the Left its victory? First, opinion continued to swing against the Left between the ballots – an effect heightened by the disappointment felt by the Left (especially the PS) over its first ballot total. Second, the Right, which had mobilised so impressively for the first ballot surpassed itself with an even greater turnout on the run-off. Finally, the Left parties proved quite incapable of pulling together by switching maximal support to best-placed candidates of the rival party.

The agreement signed by the Left parties after the first ballot had been a diaphanous papering over of the cracks. The PS needed PCF votes on the second ballot to avoid electoral massacre; for it an agreement was simply essential. The PCF could find useful employment for PS votes too but, more important, it wanted to tie PS deputies to it – while ensuring that there would not be an uncomfortably large number of the latter, sufficient to throw the PCF into the shade. The PCF had actually been quite relieved by its own first ballot showing – and even more by the relative failure of the PS. And neither party wanted to take the blame for failing to reach a unity pact, however belated. All of which was perfectly apparent to voters who were unconvinced that such a jerry-built

a marginal, but both Left parties hated him more than they did one another. Everywhere else whenever the PS and PCF formed firing squads, it was to face each other.

This fratricidal conflict disastrously increased the reluctance of PS or PCF voters to transfer their votes to their presumed allies. No more than 80 per cent (instead of the more usual 90-95 per cent) of the PCF vote went to the PS – the figure in each seat probably having an inverse relationship to the strength of the local PCF section. Only 60 per cent (instead of the hoped-for 75 per cent) of the PS vote went to the PCF against the RPR, and against the UDF the figure fell to a net 40 per cent. The PCF was able largely to compensate for these losses by its sheer organisational strength. The PS was by no means so well equipped and thus took the full brunt of PCF abstentions. Moreover, its electorate was being tugged powerfully by the UDF and many of its own anti-Communist supporters were deeply susceptible to the Right's propaganda.

The PS disaster made Giscard the real victor of the election. PCF and centrist defections from the PS helped elect no less than 137 UDF deputies. And while the UDF was gaining 10 seats, the RPR was losing 20 – falling to 153 seats. There is thus a new balance within the Right, much to Giscard's advantage. It will not be easy for Giscard to consolidate the motley band of the UDF into a real rival to the RPR – with its homogeneous, militant, well-organised support. But he has time before 1981 (the next presidential election) and his position has been utterly transformed by this election result. Before it the main question was whether he could possibly serve out his term of office. Now there seems little to stop him from being the first directly elected French President to secure a second term.

What, though, is the Left to do? Mitterrand's strategy of readjusting the balance within the Left has been successful in terms of votes, but not in seats (where the gap between PCF and PS is much narrower than before). Worse, the credibility of the union of the Left is in shreds and, with it, the Common Programme. The Left Radicals have already announced that they no longer regard themselves as bound by it and others may follow. And the strategy of building PS strength on Communist votes is dead because the PCF just won't have it. All the pressures are for the PS to desert the PCF and move towards the Giscardian centre. Certainly the air is full of talk of *reformattes* suitable to a Centre-Left government, of bits of the Common Programme to be conceded now that its proponents have been defeated. Paris buzzes with talk of new and improbable ministerial combinations. Such talk should be discounted. True, the PS may be willing to vote through some of Giscard's reforms now, especially if it can gain recognition as the official Opposition and some real parliamentary rights. But the central fact remains that the parties of Left and Right cannot seek escape from their alliances without great pain and damage.

There is only one way out of this logjam – a change towards a PR electoral sys-

tem which would simultaneously free the PS and UDF from the need to rely on PCF and RPR electoral support, respectively. PR is likely to be used for the coming European elections and, of course, the electoral system is never far from the centre of French political debate. Until now the debate was academic, for the Gaullists could never tolerate such a change – which would weaken their hold forever. But, quietly and hardly noticed, this election has changed all

that. For the first time in the history of the Fifth Republic there is a possible parliamentary majority exclusive of the Gaullists. There are 137 UDF deputies and 115 PS and Left Radicals: an overall majority requires 246 seats. It may yet be the case that an election which was to have changed the face of France by giving it a Left majority will turn out to be significant mainly as a decisive step in the decline of Gaullism.

Paris

Ian Black

Lebanon's Wild South

At the northernmost tip of the finger of Israeli territory pointing accusingly into the rolling country of Southern Lebanon Metulla's modest guest houses in normal times offer *Wiener Kuche* and a calm and pastoral view a world away from the raucous beaches of the Mediterranean coast. Normal times, though, are hard to come by in this part of the world and last week the solid basalt houses built by Jewish settlers financed by Baron Edmond de Rothschild at the end of the last century shook to the sound of Israeli artillery batteries pounding unseen targets in the hills beyond.

It was an audible, rather than a visible, war. In Kiryat Shmona south of Metulla, the townspeople were deep in the shelters and out of earshot of the whine of the Katyusha rockets that fall there even in normal times. An overturned half-track lay clumsily in a roadside ditch and an occasional helicopter whirled back south carrying casualties to the hospital in Safed. Up in tiny border town dusty soldiers slouched in military vehicles and a frightened dog yelped with each shell burst. 'Dear Visitors' read a sign in Hebrew, French and English, in the courtyard of the town's largest *pension*, now crowded out with American film crews, 'if you are willing to donate for the Lebanese people of this region, please pay your donation through bank Leumi Account No 119149. Please give nothing personally.'

As the charred and dismembered corpses of the victims of the Palestinian terror rampage on the Tel Aviv highway were being sorted out for burial, it was only a question of waiting for the weather to clear before Israel launched its massive military operation in Southern Lebanon. The frenzied attack on the coastal road set off the increasingly taut military and political trip-wire that has been gingerly strung across Southern Lebanon since the previous Israeli government instituted the concept of a 'red line', beyond which hostile elements should not be allowed to pass. However, in the weeks before last week's outrage criticism had been voiced within Israel that for a government chock-full of generals – Weizman, Dayan and Sharon – too passive a line was being taken on the creeping encroachment of PLO units on positions unnervingly close to the northern border. Only the day before the terror raid,

the commander of the Christian forces in the south, Major Sa'ad Haddad, had expressed his deep disappointment that Israel had failed to halt the advance of Syrian-backed Sa'eka troops.

Israel's previous inaction stemmed, on the one hand, from the belief that the Sa'eka troops posed no real threat to her security together with a hope that the Syrians were managing to keep the PLO under control; and, on the other, from the awareness that sending troops into Lebanon might further imperil the fragile rapprochement with Egypt. In the light, though, of the Israeli government's extraordinary stupidity over the 'settlements' issue, it would seem that its apparent sensitivity to the possible repercussions of such a move resulted more from US State Department pressure than from self-imposed restraint. Indeed, following PLO/Katyusha attacks last November, the Israeli air force carried out a large-scale raid on Lebanon causing hundreds of casualties, even though Sadat had already announced his intention of visiting the Knesset.

None of this, though, should be allowed to obscure the fact that Israeli interest in who controls Southern Lebanon is not an innovation of recent weeks. True, it was only in August of last year that Israel publicly admitted giving aid to the Christians, but its active support of their militias goes back to the summer of 1976. For Israel, the 'good fence' on its northern frontier has become something of an institutionalised and much celebrated symbol of goodwill, where the people of Southern Lebanon can cross over to receive medical treatment, military training and even find work in Israeli enterprises. This 'good fence' has, indeed, made good neighbours, and many beleaguered Southern Lebanese now look to Israel as their only protector. Whether the atrocity stories emerging from the South are to be believed in full or not, it is no surprise that several villages have asked to be taken under the wing of the Israeli army, rather than continue to suffer the depredations of an increasingly desperate PLO.

Aside from the military and political questions involved in filling the abhorred vacuum in the South, there is an ideological dimension, too, to Israeli-Christian cooperation. As the world watched in horror as fun-

loving democratic Lebanon tore itself apart in its 20-month civil war, Israel found what it believed was the ultimate vindication of its rejection of PLO rhetoric about 'a secular and democratic Palestine'. Lebanon's Christians and Moslems were united only in death, a tragic irony for a war begun by radicals to end the 'confessional' system in Lebanese politics which funnelled power through the traditional leaders of each religious sect.

Rejected by a hostile Moslem world, Israel has identified with the Lebanese Christians – especially the Maronites – as it has, too, with the Kurds in Iraq and with the Druze, Shi'ites and Mutawallis who make up the heterogeneous population of Southern Lebanon. The Christians, too, make much of this ideological affinity. In the Thirties, when Lebanon was more Christian (in numbers and, perhaps, in morality too) than it is today, President Emile de Edde, father of millionaire Christian National Bloc leader Raymond Edde, saluted the present Israeli Defence Minister's uncle, Chaim Weizmann, as 'the first president of the future Jewish state'. And Kibbutz Hanita, perched high on a ridge overlooking the Israeli-Lebanese border, was established 40 years ago this week, in March 1938, with Lebanese *gendarmes* keeping Palestinian Arab rebels at bay while the Jewish settlers moved in.

Ideology and history apart, the current battle for the South is far more likely to be decided – like everything else around here – in Washington and New York rather than at Narjayoun, Bint J'beil or at the Beaufort crusaders' castle, built 800 years ago by that most christian knight, Fulk of Anjou, to protect Tyre and Sidon from

the ravages of the Moslems of Damascus. But the Syrians, too, will play an important role in the weeks to come, especially if the Israeli invasion force is prodded by PLO resistance into crossing the Litani river into Lebanon's central Bekka valley, which will then leave Damascus open to attack from the west.

If, though, Syria's recent behaviour is anything to go by, President Assad will not allow his country – although increasingly bolstered by Soviet military aid – to be dragged by the PLO into a real confrontation with Israel. The whole chequered history of the relationship between Damascus and the Palestinians, strewn as it is with Syrian *volte-faces* and armed clashes, suggests that while Syria will continue to pay lip-service to the Rejection Front, it won't mind too much if the Palestinians get another pounding.

The question of the future of South Lebanon now hangs somewhere between the Israeli advance towards the Litani and the Begin/Dayan visit to the Oval Office. Israel has long since agreed in principle to the stationing of a UN force in the South, but with memories of Nasser's peremptory dismissal of the UN from Sinai in May 1967, international peacekeeping has never been very popular here. It seems unlikely that what passes for the Lebanese Government will be able to guarantee the maintenance of order in its own wild South and even more unthinkable that the Syrians will now agree to clamp down on their troublesome Palestinian brethren, although Damascus might welcome a UN presence as a painless way of recouping its rather bruised standing in the Arab world.

Jerusalem

Tim Albert

Will the Teachers Learn?

As they gather in Blackpool today, delegates to the annual conference of the National Union of Teachers would do well to ask themselves this question: why are they so unpopular? They will have come fresh from their end-of-term industrial action, designed to show recalcitrant local education authorities that they have industrial muscle – as well as to demonstrate how much work they do without being paid for it.

It got off to a splendid start, with the resignation of Sir Ashley Bramall from the employers' side, apparently because he agreed with the teachers. But then the action went horribly wrong, with the employers intransigent, pockets of school children staging their own highly publicised industrial action (on the encouraging platform of wanting their schools kept open . . .) and the Prime Minister weighing in heavily against them.

Nor was it the first time this year that the union has managed to make itself look rather silly. First was their apparently churlish reception of the Great Debate and the

subsequent Green Paper, culminating in their advice to local authorities to refuse to fill in the DES questionnaire on the curriculum. Then there was their dismissal of the Taylor Report on the management of schools as a 'busybodies' charter', and the role in suppressing part of a controversial report into race and schools commissioned by the Schools Council. At times they have given the impression that they are little more than a collection of ageing male headmasters with their heads stuck firmly in the chalk, a conditioned response which causes them to salivate aggressively whenever the words 'curriculum control' are mentioned, and a policy that amounts to little more than the status quo with more money in the pocket and fewer little heads in the classroom.

Judging from the agenda, this year's conference will do little to improve things. The showpiece debate, to be opened by former NUT president, Max Morris, looks hopeful enough. Its subject is the executive memorandum on educational standards, but on close inspection this turns out to be not

concerned with the quality of things taught, but a rather self-congratulatory endorsement of the union's fight for pupil ratios to be at most 27 in nursery classes, 30 in primary classes, and 32 in secondary classes. Doubtless it looks rather different to the harassed teacher faced with 35 unruly adolescents in a crumbling classroom, but – compared with such issues as the wicked divisiveness of our education systems – it hardly looks to be the most pressing issue in British schools at the moment.

Yet, to be fair, there have been positive achievements. In the past year the union has put on 10,000 extra members, making them at 265,000 larger than all the rival teaching unions put together. Their campaigns, particularly that in Oxfordshire, have had a notable success in causing local education authorities to reconsider some of their planned cutbacks; the NUT say that 4,000 jobs have been saved in this way. They reacted sensibly (far more sensibly than some) to the National Front's empty threats, with a reasoned guide for head teachers, and initiated a commitment to training of their own by spending £340,000 on Stoke Rochford Hall in Lincolnshire, a former teacher training college which they will recycle as a teachers' union training college. They also agitated to some good effect over the scandal of the £7m. earmarked by central government for the in-service training of teachers, but unused by local authorities for this purpose.

So why the poor image? Part of it, of course, reflects the type of press we have, but part of it comes from the union's own internal weaknesses. Although their roots go back over a hundred years, they have only been affiliated to the TUC for eight, and much of the membership – the majority of which still consists of female, assistant teachers in primary schools – still wears the trade union mantle rather reluctantly. This, and the often criticised confusion between professional and trade union roles, gives the union leaders some obvious, if special, problems.

That structural weakness will doubtless pass with time. More serious is another handicap, which arises from the union's parochial constituency – teachers. It's very easy to laugh at them; there is something contradictory in the notion of the fraternal pedagogue – Comrade Chips for goodness sake? Many people who leave school do so with unkind memories of stern authoritarian teachers and thereafter dismiss those who spend their working lives in the company of children as being incapable of running something as adult as a trade union.

There could be some truth in it. Writing in *New Society* last week, the Reader in education at the University of Manchester argued that because of the type of job they do, many teachers end up as great talkers and bad learners, petty and over-serious, generally exhausted. Could that description also be applied to the main teachers' union? If, over the next few days, its members spend some of their time considering that point, instead of wheeling out the same old concerns for their working conditions, it would do their cause and that of education generally (and I deliberately separate the two) a great deal of good.

Basil Davidson

Beyond the Flags and Anthems

Optimistic Romans might have sighed: but there the fact squarely is. What now comes out of Africa is neither new nor exciting, or seeming likely to be such, but what is old, predictable and boring. The liberating nationalism of 20 and 30 years ago was nearly always a joyful lift to the spirit, a piece of moral happiness. But the subsequent development of that particular nationalism now appears more and more a fruitless rivalry between ruling 'elites' – chosen, however, largely by themselves – who seem to have nothing to offer save a new edition of Europe's national brawls and bloody-mindedness. Field Marshal Amin VC and Bokassa *Imperator* may add a touch or two of original farce to this twice-told guignol, but it's pretty much the case of the man who laughs being the one who hasn't heard the bad news.

In so far as all that is true, and very probably it is, do we have another 'god that failed'? For those who have thought that the right and proper end of decolonisation was the successful transfer into Africa of nation-states on the capitalist and parliamentary plan – of bourgeois nation-states, if the jargon be allowed – the answer will be yes: yes, indignantly. This refurbished chauvinism could not be what the liberal conscience laboured for. With all the gruesome examples of Europe before them, from small wars to huge wars, persecutions, tortures, dictatorships of iron-tongued malice and holocausts of victims, the Africans have still not learned the necessary lesson.

Socialists may be saddened, but they will scarcely be disillusioned. It seems quite unlikely, at least to me, that we ever thought that the bourgeois nation-state could or should be more than a stage, with luck a fairly short one, in the whole decolonising process. It had to be gone through, not for any doctrinal reason, but because there was no other strategy that could open a decisive breach in colonial bastions. Most of the nationalist opinion-makers were politically conservative in their ideas about the future; while the major colonial powers, Britain pushed by the US and France pulled along by Britain, would in any case recognise no alternative to their own models. Any other conceivable model, as was incessantly repeated at the time and rehearsed in practice by the police, must mean chaos or the crafty arm of Moscow. A people fit to become free was a people who would happily accept and work the capitalist structures and parliamentary institutions of a history altogether different from their own.

I doubt if many socialists thought that this could end in anything but tears: or not many, at any rate, who were influenced by the NEW STATESMAN. This paper was strongly in support of an end to colonial systems, but with few illusions, so far as I recall, about the liberating limits of the proposed model. One finds a relevant editorial as early as September 1950, at a time when the cam-

paigns of African nationalism were first getting under way. If African modes of self-rule now had to tramp the same weary trail as those of Europe, argued this editorial, the result would be a sad one: because, in that case, 'there is nothing to suggest that Black nationalism will be any more desirable than White nationalism'. Perhaps the one great enterprise upon which colonial powers could still embark was 'to ensure that self-government and independence are achieved under certain social – and, in the end, socialist – safeguards'. Words in the wind, no doubt: but words now returning on the whirlwind.

And it must be said that socialist ideas of this kind were not without their influence among the leaders of the new nation-states. The best of these leaders accepted the models they were given, but turned at once to the problems of adapting them to the needs of unity and progress. One of these problems was to achieve a rational reorganisation of the arbitrary and often absurd frontiers they had inherited from the colonial period, and to set about this quickly while the mould, as it were, was still warm. Nkrumah in Ghana (1957) and Sékou Touré in Guinea (1958) preached a union of states. Progressives in French West Africa – Djibo Bakary, Abdoulaye Diallo, others – tried hard to persuade the French to agree that their eight-territory colonial 'federation' of AOF should be transformed into an independent confederation of eight units. Others urged the same idea for the four French equatorial colonies. Julius Nyerere led a campaign for the confederal independence of the three major British East African dependencies. There was even talk of federating the three countries of the Maghrib.

None of this came to anything. The colonial powers had their own reasons for preventing any reduction of frontiers. Very soon, too, new nationalist 'elites' saw the ex-colonial frontiers as a means of guarding their own spheres of interest and exploitation. Even so, perhaps there could be sensible moves towards eliminating some of the most contentious frontier disputes? To that end, the new rulers of Nigeria offered a useful precedent. They accepted a UN-supervised referendum in their mandated Cameroons region. Should this region stay in Nigeria, or be joined to the neighbouring (ex-French) Cameroon republic? The question was settled a few months after Nigeria's independence. In northern Cameroons, with 762,000 inhabitants, 145,265 voted to stay in Nigeria and 97,654 to join Cameroon; they stayed in Nigeria. In southern Cameroons, with 862,000 inhabitants, those voting for Nigeria totalled 46,250 and those for Cameroon 181,464; they were joined to the Cameroon republic. An explosive problem was solved with no bother or further argument.

But the precedent was not followed. Another was preferred. The characteristic case

was not to be the transfer of 862,000 people and their land from Nigeria to Cameroon, but the refusal to transfer 95,000 people and their land from Kenya to Somalia. Given its influence, the case is worth recalling. North of Kenya proper the British had long governed a large area of arid pastureland inhabited mostly by Somali cattlemen. They had ruled it as a more or less separate entity, though it was not a mandate, and called it the Northern Frontier District.

During the run-up to Kenyan independence, which came in 1963, the overwhelmingly Somali population of this NFD asked persistently to be joined to the Somali republic, next-door and independent since 1960. Being cattlemen handy with spears, they asked in a very pointed way, and left no doubt about what they wanted. In the pre-independence general election of May 1963, they also applied a total and effective boycott of the polling stations. None of this made any difference to the outcome. The future President of Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta, had already settled the issue by stating in the best tradition of European chauvinism that an independent Kenya 'will not entertain any secession or handing over of one inch of our country': although, historically, the NFD had never formed any part of Kenya save in a notional way. So it turned out; and the people of the NFD were left to carry on a guerrilla war until 1967, another protest in which they failed.

Far from accepting the colonial frontiers merely as a necessary stratagem for gaining political independence, the new rulers of Kenya declared these frontiers sacred; and others duly followed them. Not only was there to be no constructive merging of new sovereignties into more rational units: beyond that, there was not even to be any readjustment of frontiers wherever these were most resented. The year of Kenya's independence was also the year of the founding of the OAU, the Organisation of African Unity. This was given a splendidly progressive charter calling for all-African legislatures and executives. But its reality was an assembly of governments (later on, as often as not, of dictators or their spokesmen) whose dominant leaders, for the most part, were perfectly ready to consecrate the principle of African disunity. The OAU went on to inscribe its golden rule on the tablets of diplomacy. This was that the colonial frontiers were never to be called in question.

The wiser heads accepted this rule with regret, and as being unavoidable in the circumstances. They hoped there could at least be sensible exceptions such as the transfer of the southern Cameroons. But most of the new rulers, whether as individuals or groups or coalitions, were found to be well satisfied with the 'estates' which they had taken over or now effectively possessed, and very determined to defend what they had got. The mass of their voters probably cared nothing or very little, by all the evidence (and with frontier exceptions), for the territorial integrity of the nation-states they were now living in; but nobody bothered to ask them. Onwards from 1963, with the golden rule in operation, irredentist problems had to simmer or explode.

Whether in Africa or anywhere else, the history of nationalism suggests that the

simmering will continue and the explosions will be many. There is now the peculiar case of Ethiopia: peculiar because the Ethiopia of today was not a colony but an empire, and put together at about the same time as the European empires in Africa. Back in the 'scramble' days, the wide pasturelands of the Ogaden and Haud were notionally partitioned into Italian and British spheres, neither power being then prepared to accept the Ethiopian emperor Menelik's imperial ambition to enclose those pasturelands. But the Italians took a beating in their war with Menelik, and Menelik won a colonial sovereignty over the almost entirely Somali population of the Ogaden, while the entirely Somali population of the Haud was awarded British 'protection'. But in 1897 the British handed over the Haud Somalis to Ethiopia, without of course asking their consent; and once again a sacred frontier was drawn upon the map.

Ethiopian Intransigence

Having lived in the Ogaden and Haud since known history began, these Somalis resented Ethiopian colonial rule, and continued to urge their claim to join with other Somali communities. When British Somaliland and Italian Somalia became a single independent republic in 1960, the Ogaden and Haud Somalis renewed their claim. There was nothing doing so long as the old regime stood firm in Ethiopia; but in 1974 an Ethiopian regime with a revolutionary programme took its place. Now at last, surely, the old sore could be peacefully removed, and all the more because the republic of Somalia was also governed by a regime with a revolutionary programme? Between them they could blur the colonial frontier, downgrade it, declare a confederation, or simply transfer the Ogaden and Haud Somalis to Somalia. By all revolutionary precepts, why ever not?

The Somali president, Siyad Barre, certainly thought that the moment had come for peaceful moves to a mutually acceptable settlement. He went out of his way to welcome the new Ethiopian regime, and sent some of his most trusted counsellors to Addis Ababa to see what could be done. Early in 1975, still expecting a sensible negotiation, he curbed the warlike intentions of the Ogaden Somalis, and even went so far as to place under house arrest a number of militant leaders of the Ogaden liberation movement who were then in Somalia. By mid-1975, however, it was clear that the new regime in Addis, though genuinely innovative in respect of land reform and other structural changes, was unwilling or unable to dismantle any of its predecessors' imperial positions. Whereupon the Ogaden Somalis took to arms and the fighting began: deplorably, perhaps, but in practice unavoidably. And Siyad Barre, shoved by Ethiopian intransigence, had no practical option but to follow them.

Much the same considerations apply to Eritrea, another part of the Ethiopian empire. Colonised by Italy in the period of Menelik's expansion, Eritrea passed under British military control during the second world war, and then, early in the 1950s and by a decision of the UN, was joined to

Ethiopia as a federated state. Given that the Tigrigna spoken in much of Eritrea is little different from the Tigrigna spoken across the old Ethiopian frontier in Tigre, this was generally accepted as a sensible solution. But Menelik's notable successor, the Emperor Haile Selassie, thought otherwise.

In 1962 he annexed this federated state, destroyed its autonomy, and brought it under direct Amharic rule, just as had long been the case in Ogaden and Haud. The Eritrean Parliament gave its full consent. But evidently without any sufficient public agreement, and the consequences of direct Amharic rule soon changed the minds even of those who had consented. A guerrilla war for Eritrean independence began some 16 years ago, and has continued ever since: in African terms, it has long become a major war. Here again it has been fairly probable that this Eritrean independence movement, or at least its major and progressive wing (the EPLF), would have settled for a renewed federation with a progressive Ethiopia. But here again the new regime in Addis has refused the least concession, and stood pat on its imperial positions.

Deprived of US military aid in February 1977, the Addis regime turned at once to the USSR, and had immediate success. With evident reluctance, the hitherto Soviet-aided Somali regime turned back to the West, but with small success save by way of Iran and some other Middle Eastern states. What will emerge remains to be seen. An Ethiopia standing on the faces of two of its major minorities, and continuing to be in any sense revolutionary, is obviously impossible.

Castro's Role

The only new note so far heard, in this long misery, was sounded at a meeting in Aden during March 1977 when Fidel Castro repeated an earlier proposal for moves to a confederal solution in the region. Well-informed reports of that meeting say that the opposition to any such move came not from the Somalis or the Eritreans who were present, but from the Ethiopian leader Mengistu, who brought discussion to a stop by denying that the Ethiopian empire contained any problem of minorities. For reasons that have yet to become clear, Castro then began supporting the Addis regime, and set about restoring the Ethiopian Empire. Yet some kind of confederal blurring of frontiers no doubt remains the solution for which he and others may continue to work or hope, and could even now emerge as the fruit of an intelligent compromise.

I pass over any close look at the external factors because their obvious presence, whether from East or West, still leaves the Africans in control of the actual decisions that are made. Their evident inability to get beyond the received model of the nation-state, even in this extreme case of an out-moded empire, shows how firmly the history of the past hundred years still has them in its grip. This being so, one may deduce a few conclusions. The first is that the received model is well past the peak of its liberating potential and is fast sliding down the other side: but with some way still to go, through troughs of violence, before any

other model can take its place. *Some* way still to go? Who knows: very possibly a long way. Anyone with a taste for comparative history may reflect on the persistence of the sacred nation-state in eastern Europe. Even now, with capitalist and parliamentary structures long since out of window, Magyars and Romanians (to mention only them) still fail to solve the minority problems of Transylvania.

Failures of the Old

Is there, then, any known way in which Africa's 50 or so new nation-states can escape from the conflicts of an ingrained nationalism? If non-African history is any guide, there is no capitalist model that can offer them a way out, or at any rate none so far invented. An advanced capitalism may be able to do it, but Africans do not have an advanced capitalism and cannot possibly have one, on the best of hopes, for very many years ahead. Of the non-capitalist models, the Magyar-Romanian and its parallels may be more hopeful, though evidently not much. Perhaps the Yugoslav model can do better? We can in any case conclude that escape can come only on some kind of non-capitalist or anti-capitalist model.

Can Africa produce that kind of model for itself? Here one can at least note that a new trend of thought and theory began to appear even before the 1960s ended. The liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies rejected the reformist nationalism of the 1960s on the grounds that it could achieve little save a change of masters: black 'elites' instead of white ones. Partly from the experience and pressure of their anti-colonial struggles, they have evolved a theory and practice of revolutionary nationalism. While accepting a nationalist framework as unavoidable, they look towards a revolutionary democracy, egalitarian and eventually socialist, which, while resolving inter-nationality or inter-ethnic conflicts within their states, can go on to move towards a merging of state sovereignties.

Given its great internal success, very clear today even in Angola where the heritage was most difficult, this concept of a revolutionary nationalism quietly makes progress and wins adherents. Not much, or even not at all, among the elderly and established: but some 45 per cent of Africa's population today is credibly reckoned to be under 15, and the young are tired of the failures of the old. The further prospect is of a rising generation that will see these issues very differently from most of those who are now in power. Again, who knows? Yet the formative experience of Africa's under-30s, certainly far more than half the population, is one of deepening crisis apparently beyond cure by any familiar remedy: whether in falling standards of life as productive systems fail increasingly to expand with rapidly rising populations, or in a painfully large and spreading gap between the few rich and many poor, or in political systems which falter or collapse, or in the broadening shadow of inter-state rivalry and conflict. More and more, from all I hear, there is a new consciousness of choice: that Africa must revolutionise itself, and soon: or go, and sooner, entirely to the devil.

Christopher Booker

Muggeridge at Seventy-five

To those below the age of 25 the notion of a connection between the radical, free-thinking, socialist NEW STATESMAN and Malcolm Muggeridge, the white-haired old Bible-thumper of Robertsbridge, must seem fairly bizarre. They probably find it hard to credit that this latter-day decrifier of abortion and euthanasia, ally of Mrs Whitehouse, was once regarded as the most cynical and iconoclastic journalist in Britain – let alone that his affinity with the NEW STATESMAN was so close that, as he has recorded in his autobiography, he learned to smoke it even before he learned to read it.

In fact it was nearly 50 years ago, on 1 December 1928, that Malcolm began what has remained the most continuous journalistic affiliation of his life, with a Chekhovian short story about an elderly school-teacher named Twistead. 'Poor old Twistead,' they would say at the school he had served for 50 years, 'he belongs to the old school – but he's nearly finished his time now'. As NEW STATESMAN readers of 50 years later might echo, 'poor old Mugg' – and today, of course, it is Mugg himself who, as he never tires of telling us, 'has nearly finished his time' (although, on his diet of yoghurt and wild honey, I suspect he will outlive us all). This Good Friday he is 75.

There is no one on earth of whom I have a greater mass of impressions buzzing around my head than of Malcolm, going back to the day more than a quarter of a century ago when, as a 13-year-old school-boy, I first pulled down a battered, blue-cover copy of *The Thirties* from my father's bookshelves.

It was to be another 13 years or so before we actually met, at a dinner party in Chelsea in the autumn of 1963. Malcolm was then just turned 60, his hair already whitening, his face lined by that expression of quizzical disdain which had made him well-known to tens of millions of TV viewers. I was in my mid-twenties. But from the moment we were introduced a flow of talk began which has never really stopped since, in now countless visits to that little whitewashed cottage at the end of a potholed farm track just outside Robertsbridge in Sussex which is where in my mind's eye (as in physical fact) I almost invariably see him. Images pour forth in profusion – Mugg sitting in his chintz-covered armchair beneath the faded photograph of Beatrice Webb, striding through the nearby woods and hopfields on his daily walk, locked in grim and solitary battle with his patience cards. But always, across the years, dominating everything from the moment I walk through the door, has been the unceasing flow of talk and reminiscence and gossip, always returning to the same themes – the ludicrous pagant of the great world, the impending end of civilisation (I rang him once during the

1967 Arab-Israeli War – his first words were 'Is this the Big Show?', instantly answered with a slightly disappointed-sounding 'I don't think so').

The chief fact which cannot be ignored in setting down even the most personal impression of Malcolm is that there is no other writer of our time who has been at such pains to give us so clear an impression of himself. For half-a-century he has been pouring forth millions of words which all read like one single article – endlessly reworking the same images, the same anecdotes, the same jokes, the same private attitudes to the public drama of the 20th century, into one seamless web. There is no public figure with whose life we have been made so familiar – the 'socialist childhood' in Croydon, teaching in India, disillusionment with liberalism in Cross Street, the even more disillusioning 'winter in Moscow', wartime spying in Mozambique, the years as editor of *Punch*, telly fame in the late Fifties and Sixties – and then the final, to many still baffling, apotheosis of Mugg as Christian apologist, battling against porn,

pot and the pill. There is scarcely a phrase which has not been polished and repolished.

Yet here perhaps, even in the very fact and nature of this lovingly honed recital, is the way in to Mugg. There is the nagging suspicion, even to some of those who know and love him best, that it has all been shaped and polished just *too* carefully. Mugg's relentless will that this is the version we should know and believe is just a little too obvious. Protestations of humility, confessions of weakness, eagerness for the joyful release of death and all, it reads just a little too much like a very carefully prepared 'cover story'. Whom is he really trying to convince – and of what?

The recurring question about Malcolm in the public mind these days is what might be termed 'the Great Mugg Riddle'. How can a man who, for 40 years, seemed cast as the prince of cynics – womaniser, hard drinker, insatiable gossip – have ended up, as death approaches, apparently uttering nothing more than Christian platitudes? I recall those late-night TV shows he used to do in the early Sixties, interviewing celebrities, his face a picture of worldly disillusion, hands elegantly clasped in the mode though not the practice of prayer, cigarette-holder cocked, smoke wreathing the screen. In those beguilingly modulated accents, it seemed quite immaterial whom he was questioning – whether it was the Archbishop of Capetown ('tell me, Joost, the Church of England – how is it going?')



or the Minister of Transport ('Tell me, Ernest, these roads of yours – how are they going?').

What, everyone wants to know, was the 'Damascus moment'? The answer, I believe, is that it happened very much earlier in Malcolm's life than most people think – when in 1932 he and his wife Kitty set off for Moscow so convinced that in the Russia of 'the Great Soviet Experiment' they would find the new, just society of the future that they sold up all their possessions. What actually confronted them in the Socialist Utopia was the greatest shock of Malcolm's life. The contrast between the glowing picture painted of Soviet life in the West and the grim, starving, slave-society they found, was so shattering that Malcolm fled back to Switzerland and poured out his reactions in a searing satirical novel, *Winter In Moscow*. Here in 1934 are the foundations of the world view which has sustained him ever since:

'Do you really believe' Wraithby asked, 'that these awful plays are good; these wretched people happy . . . these decrepit buildings, fine architecture; these dingy slums, new Socialist cities; these empty slogans bawled mechanically, a new religion?'

As he wrote, quite explicitly:

All he had ever seen or thought or felt or believed, sorted itself out. It was a vision of Good and Evil. Heaven and Hell. Life or death. These were the two alternatives, and he had to choose. He chose.

Over the next few years he tried to come to terms with his new perspective on the world. He began to perceive the capacity of human beings to create and feed on illusions everywhere, not least in those more personal demons which still had him in their grip, as he confessed in perhaps the bleakest of all his writings, a novel called *In A Valley Of This Restless Mind* (1938), which opens:

Looking for God, I sat in Westminster Abbey . . . the Cross . . . seeming to promise an alternative to the Will's arrogance, the Flesh's passion and Time's inevitable corruption.

This dark and tortured book, which Evelyn Waugh said seemed to have been written by 'a surfeited and rather scared Calvinist', shot through with mystical flashes ('I sensed a Oneness in all the diversity around me, and this Oneness was irradiated with an inward glow of love') is the most personal Malcolm ever wrote. Certainly there was to be no easy release, no blind acceptance of the stereotyped nostrums offered by any conventional church. Malcolm had embarked on a very difficult and solitary path, and it was perhaps no accident that in these years he came under the greatest single influence of his adult life, his friendship with Hugh Kingsmill – who once wrote, in words which Malcolm has quoted on countless occasions, 'the attempt to realise the kingdom of heaven in temporal shape must end in disaster . . . those who set out for it alone will find that they reach it in company; while those who seek it together, must perish by themselves'.

Not all was so bleak. The years of incessant talk with Kingsmill (their families remember with horror one telephone call which lasted nine hours) helped to release

the lighter side of Malcolm's new sense of the absurdity of existence – that marvellous sense of humour which led him to some of his favourite characters in literature, Don Quixote and Falstaff, and which was so evident in what to my mind is still his most satisfactory book, *The Thirties*. George Orwell, commenting in 1940 on Mugg's view of the world as expressed in this brilliant, kaleidoscopic, dream-like view of a decade, described it as 'the Book of Ecclesiastes with the pious interpolations left out'. Orwell suggested that Mugg's prognosis for the future seemed to be simply that a godless human race was doomed to head for the most appalling catastrophe, 'although I rather suspect Mr Muggidge of enjoying the prospect'.

In fact for the next 25 years this was the public stance which Mugg continued to display to the world – years which, through his editorship of *Punch* between 1953 and 1957, and even more his new career as a television personality (his first appearance was interviewing Billy Graham in 1954), brought him enormous fame and success, and took him to the very peak of his profession. I always marvel when I consider just what an astonishing ringside seat Mugg has had on what he likes to describe as the 'legend', the public drama of our time. Right back to the days 50 years ago, when he was corresponding with Gandhi (or rubbing shoulders with Lysenko at Soviet receptions), the scenes of his life succeed each other like some crazy montage of newsfilm. Through all these scenes, Mugg continued to see and to portray the world simply as an absurd passing show, as was demonstrated in the article he wrote

Roger Woddiss

Discordant Note

Cellist Rostropovitch and his wife, Galina Vishnevskaya, the opera singer, have been stripped of their Soviet citizenship for harming Soviet 'prestige'.

They're such a bright lot in the Kremlin,
They analyse currents and trends,
They know how to influence people
And how to win over new friends.

In matters pertaining to music,
Their knowledge and taste are supreme;
They lean to the richly rococo,
But don't like to vary the theme.

The sound of a suspect concerto
Demands an official decree;
They shake at the start of a movement
And quake if its slightly off-key.

The tone of a dissonant cellist
Fills Leonid B. with alarm,
But which of them benefits Russia,
And which of them does the more harm?

The heads, like the walls, of the Kremlin
Are so irreducibly thick
They'd probably chuck out Tchaikovsky
And Glinka would be in the nick.

for the NEW STATESMAN of 22 October 1955:

There are probably a lot of people – more than might be supposed – who, like myself, feel that another newspaper photograph of the Royal Family will be more than they can bear. Even Princess Anne, a doubtless estimable child, becomes abhorrent by constant repetition. Already she has that curiously characteristic gesture of limply holding up her hand to acknowledge applause. The Queen Mother, Nanny Lightbody, Group Captain Townsend – the whole show is utterly out of hand.

And of course it was the tremendous public outcry which greeted the publication of a version of this piece in an American magazine two years later, which finally launched Mugg into the 'legend' himself, as a household name.

What had happened to those stirrings of mysticism in the late Thirties, that search for some private, inner reality as an alternative to this world of illusion? There were few signs, publicly or privately, in the Fifties and early Sixties that Malcolm was battling to free himself from his demons. The *via dolorosa* of the Will, as he might have put it, had never seemed so broad and easy. His television films, his journalism had never been so assured, so well-rewarded, so widely-acclaimed – deservedly, as one may see from his best book of journalism, *Tread Softly For You Tread On My Jokes*, with its brilliant essays on Randolph Churchill, the Kennedy cult, and of course 'Waylanding' – the marvellous send-up of portentous eroticism, in which he proposed that the verb 'to wayland' should be substituted for the four-letter word which had gained such public currency after the Chatterly trial.

And then, at the height of this worldly success, I remember in May 1966, when I was staying with him down at Robertsbridge, he brought in, and rather nervously offered to me, an article he had just written for the NEW STATESMAN. Its title was 'Is There a God?'

I have never wanted a God, or feared a God, or felt under any necessity to invent one. Unfortunately I am driven to the conclusion that God wants me. God comes padding after me like the Hound of Heaven . . . In the innermost recesses of vanity, one is discovered.

He ended:

This sense of Oneness, with the consequent release from the burden of self, I take to be God . . . Such has been the testimony of those in the past I most revere . . . to their testimony, with the greatest possible diffidence, I add my own, so hesitant, fitful and inarticulate.

He had come out with it at last.

Once he had publicly declared the position he had been trying to avoid by every possible means for 30 years, the transformation, both public and private, was incredibly rapid. Within two years, 'the Conversion of St Mugg' had become a phenomenon of the age. As he battled with the students of Edinburgh over pot and the pill, or wandered with television cameras round Palestine making 'The Life of Christ', the general reaction on all sides was one of stunned amazement. As yoghurt suc-

ceeded the whisky bottle, old drinking companions shook their heads in sorrowing disbelief. Inevitably the cry went up that, 'having had his fun', Mugg was simply taking out an insurance policy against his approaching end, and trying to spoil the fun of others. But in one sense Malcolm still remained true to his old, oft-declared position. Despite jokes about him being received into the Catholic Church (Cardinal Muggeridge), he still adhered to Kingsmill's dictum that 'those who set out for the Kingdom alone' were the only ones who had any hope of finding it. He was prepared to broadcast his newfound convictions to anyone – but in terms of religious loyalty, he was still a Church of One.

A memory of that time stands out for me very clearly. Mugg had been invited to the Television Centre to take part in a 'great debate' on heart transplants. The studio was packed with distinguished doctors and surgeons. Christian Barnard was the guest of honour, Raymond Baxter ('the Unspeakable Baxter') in the chair. It soon became clear that, in his opposition to heart transplants ('Man is made in the image of God'), Mugg was totally alone, amid an audience so hostile to his every utterance that the show seemed almost to have been rigged up for the sole purpose of exposing him.

On the drive back to Robertsbridge, Malcolm was more dejected than I have ever known him. He knew he had been made to look foolish. He knew that somehow his ego had been speaking, turning the message he so passionately wanted to put across into confused sentimentality. However much he relished being in a minority of one when he was on form (few in our time have been better at riding a hostile audience), the temptation to feel that at least *somewhere* he had allies, that somewhere there must be a group who would understand and sympathise with his message, must at that time have been very strong.

And thus, in the early Seventies, we saw the final transformation – which began publicly when he first gave his support to Mrs Whitehouse and the Festival of Light. I remember writing him a letter at this time, trying to argue the case he had often put so forcefully to me – that *all* collective attempts to campaign for the 'Kingdom of Heaven on earth', to build the just and moral society – whether in the name of Communism or Christianity – were equally fraught with dangers. And certainly it is true that, with some of the allies he has found in the past few years, Malcolm has sometimes shown himself a trifle uneasy (he has always, for instance, remained adamantly opposed to censorship of any kind).

But the fact remains that, although his scorn for the broad mass of the collapsing, ever more secular Church (whether Established Anglican or post-Vatican II Catholic) has remained unwavering, although his Christian heroes have on the whole remained those who fought a very solitary fight, at odds with the Church around them – Pascal, Tolstoy, Kierkegaard, Simone Weil – he has increasingly found himself drawn into the company of the one group of Christians with whose atti-

tudes his own would once have seemed least congruous, the Evangelicals. His expressions of his newfound faith have become more and more dogmatic. As the possessor of perhaps the strongest will I have ever known (not for nothing did Malcolm latch on so readily to Kingsmill's warnings of the dangers of the Will), he has always been an astonishingly wilful arguer. I remember once, years ago, we were almost not on speaking terms for two days after a blazing row over his insistence that Elizabethan England was as much a police state as Nazi Germany. Today he is just as likely to argue with blazing conviction, brooking no attempt at rational argument, that 'evolution is a complete fantasy and fraud', and falling back, when all else fails, on his favourite device of saying: 'Of course you don't believe me now – but, mark my words, before your time is out, evolution will have been completely disproved.'

I cannot help sometimes wondering what Cynical Old Mugg would have made of the Evangelical New Mugg. I thought this particularly when I was reading his latest publication, *Christ And The Media*, a series of three lectures he recently delivered in that cathedral of Evangelicalism, All Souls, Langham Place. All the familiar old lines were there ('I see myself as a pianist in a brothel', 'Newzak', 'In the beginning was the Flesh, and the Flesh was made word'), to illustrate his theme that all television, all broadcasting was fantasy, mere illusion.

The jokes were all just a little tired, part of a performance which had been given once too often. But what was most obvious of all, from the questions which followed, was the way in which that audience of eager young Evangelicals, their faces doubtless shining just a little too suspiciously brightly with goodness and a conviction of their own truth, basking in the unfamiliar delight of welcoming a famous TV personality into their midst, had simply not begun to understand what Malcolm was really driving at. For them, the answer to the godless evils of television is simply that 'We Christians' should work even harder to get into it and onto it, turning it to 'God's purposes' – just as their answer to all social problems is that we should strive for 'a more Christian society', full of people who have signed on the dotted line for their own particular version of 'Christ'. It is only the same old 'Kingdom of Heaven on earth' under another name – and if at least we can meet together, once or twice or thrice a week, in 'fellowship' (oh, smug, complacent, self-deceiving word) then we can work a little harder to make sure that *News at Ten* is given a 'Christian angle' and the just society may come to pass.

In short, I suspect that the younger Mugg would have had quite a field day with what he might have seen as the sentimental dogmatism and credulity of the older Mugg – in his willingness to judge his company by their outward protestations, rather than their desire to embark on the much harder task of real self-understanding. One of the younger Mugg's favourite images was that of the poor old Rector of Stiffkey in the Thirties, defrocked, hawked around as a public exhibition and finally mauled to

death by lions on the front at Skegness ('truly, a Christian thrown to the lions'). Today one may see Mugg as a Lion thrown to the Christians, with equally depressing consequences.

But it is not on that image that I would want to leave Mugg – for in his role as public evangelist, I see him still acting out his part in the 'legend', albeit with a few new lines. As I think back over the span of his life, and hear the roaring of that insatiable will, sensing the torment of that ego which could not be denied, I think of the other Mugg I have seen so often, a man whom I would rather ring up when I am really depressed than anyone on earth – one of the warmest, most thoughtful and generous people I have ever known. I have a fantasy of Malcolm arriving at the Pearly Gates and being asked by the Recording Angel what he has done on earth to justify his admission. He takes off into a lovingly polished speech about how he has tried to tell the world of the fantasies of the Will and television and fleshly appetites, and how it is all an illusion and how luminous is the spirit, and that in God alone may a man find peace. And the Angel looks at him with a faint smile and says 'Oh, Malcolm, we're not interested in all that stuff up here. All those words – they were just part of what you called the "legend". What interests us are all the things you didn't even know you were doing – all the shadows you brightened, the loads you lightened, simply by living out your life with such tremendous, infectious energy.'

Encounter

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GETTING AND SPENDING - 4

Mary Morgan

An Unfashionable Puritan

Why do people save money? More particularly, why do people in this country persist in saving their shrinking pounds in a time of inflation and recession. Keynes and Ricardo would be puzzled men, having their first laws so flouted. Perhaps the question should be rephrased. Why do economists persist in misunderstanding human nature?

How would they explain a man like Tom Lewis, a manual labourer all his working life, who, now when he has some money to spare in his middle-age, chooses to save more than one-third of the family income. Or, taking the view of another stereotype, Tom Lewis is a steelworker, and like the car-worker, is greedy, brash and improvident. He lives in South Wales: do not 6,000 Welshmen frolic over to Dublin for the Irish match, give not a second thought to blowing £150 in two days in Paris for the French match? 'We all had doctors' papers,' sings Max Boyce and there are stories of terrible shenanigans with the doctors' papers, the 80 per cent guaranteed sickness wage, income tax rebates and insurance benefits. It's a wicked place. Has *choisir est l'être* passed from the middle to the working classes?

Tom Lewis is also a union man. Perhaps in a society that needs to cling to some remnants of faith, the preachers dwindling and political leaders in gaol, the union man must be Simon Pure. Seconded from his job to full-time union work on the shop floor he draws his steelworker's rate of pay, £94 a week. The average in the works is £76 a week. His wife, Mair, works as a clerk earning £45 a week. She works because she would be bored if she didn't.

They live, with their younger son, David, who is 17 and an apprentice in the works, in a three bed-roomed house high on a hill away from the town. It is a semi-detached house, built in 1925. They now own it; they made their last mortgage payment a month ago. David makes a contribution towards his keep. Between the two parents £96 a week comes into the house. After paying for the rates, food, fuel and the car, which Tom Lewis needs to get to work, they have £2,567, nearly £50 a week to spend as they choose.

Much of it, in these last prosperous years, has been spent on the house. It was, they said 'a horrible little house when we bought it'. Now it is very pretty. The two front rooms have been knocked into one. There is central heating, fitted carpet, pine paneling, pleasant Erco Lion furniture, a coloured television set. One wall has bookshelves from floor to ceiling. It is lovingly tended, even the pot plants seem polished.

Four years ago they put in central heating, £650. Last year was insulating time, double glazing, £700, two draught-free doors, back and front, £60 (trade price from a

cousin, instead of £90. Living where you were born has advantages.) They also spent £90 on a new concrete path at the back of the house and £30 on roses and flowering shrubs for the garden. They do not have a telephone; a wise precaution for a union man. The house could become a surgery.

Apart from do-it-yourself-home-improvement blandishments, no hard or soft sell yet invented has lured the Lewis family into consumerism. Their lack of 'market demand' would baffle any researcher. It certainly would have baffled Keynes.

Take Mair Lewis. She is an extraordinarily pretty woman. She looks half her age. When we met, she was wearing trousers, a checked shirt and yellow pullover. Her thick hair, still mostly blonde, was held back by an embroidered band. The sweater she had originally knitted for her son, five years ago. The rest came from Woolworth.

Annual joint gross income	£7,280
Tax, Nat Ins. etc.	£2,288
Net income	£4,992
Rates	£160
Food	£1,456
Fuel	£230
Travel to work, car	£468
Clothes	£111
	£2,425
Leaves	£2,567

Because she is slim and small she can get away with children's sizes. Last year she bought a pair of jeans, £2.75, a pair of shoes from Woolworth, £4; a pair in a sale, £3, clogs, £6, a cotton skirt, £6 and three pairs of tights, 90p. The honest-to-God total, £22.65p. Moreover she wears no make-up and never goes to a hairdresser. She buys a bottle of English scent at Christmas.

Compared to his wife, Tom Lewis is a crazy spender on clothes, £89. He bought two pairs of shoes, £43, two pairs of pyjamas, £16, two shirts and a couple of pairs of jeans, £30. I imagine he goes to a barber once in a while. And neither of them owns an overcoat. So what do they wear to the Rugby on a wind-bitten Saturday? Carcoats, five years old.

Rugby is their only going-out in the winter, £1. During the summer they spend their weekends on the beach or in the country. South Wales is not all slag-heaps, mean terraces and shunting yards. Within a ten-minute drive from the Lewis home you could be swinging through the heather, or what heather the Forestry Commission has not blanketed with conifers. And it's free. They do not 'entertain,' they did not eat out once last year, not even on their holiday in a rented cottage in Carmarthenshire (sorry, Dyfed), £100 for the week. The bottles on the shelf could mislead. The drink is there,

generously, for people like me. It took some hard calculating to come up with the figure of £100 a year. Mair Lewis smokes seven cigarettes a day, 50p a week.

They work hard. Mair Lewis gets up at six o'clock to 'cut the boxes', that is prepare sandwich lunches for her husband and son, (they do not eat in the canteen) cook breakfast and get herself to the bus-stop by 7.30 a.m. for her job which begins at eight o'clock. She works, as they say, 'flexi' and has chosen the eight-till-four shift. That gives her time, after work, to shop, cook the evening meal, tidy up and fall into bed at 9.30. Her husband stays up for a couple of hours reading.

They spend £150 a year on books and magazines. The bookshelves hold the soberly instructive manuals that a man who left school at 14 needs to educate himself. Biographies of all the Kings of England (know your enemy), Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, *Trade Unionism in the British Steel Industry*, *Men of Steel* by One of Them. There are many bound volumes of encyclopaedic magazines: *The Family of Man*, *The British Empire*. They are currently buying *The New Oxford Illustrated Dictionary*, 75p an issue, which will also be bound and they belong to the World Book Club. They take the *Western Mail* daily, the *Guardian* three times a week, the *Observer* on Sunday.

Next year they plan to buy a new car, a British Leyland product, naturally (solidarity). They may buy a freezer. Whatever they buy will be paid for cash down. They do not approve of H.P. They have already arranged to rent a cottage in North Wales for a week, £50. Mair Lewis will buy sheets and towels.

They are not exactly awash with money; these comfortable circumstances have come to them quite late in life. The labourer may have been worthy of his hire but his labourer's wages did not go far with a mortgage to pay off and two boys to bring up. Things like the guaranteed 80 per cent of his wages now paid to the steel worker when he is sick are very new. It is this kind of right that Tom Lewis has fought hard for through the union.

Now he concedes sadly (I think he enjoys a fight) that power is passing from the shop floor. 'All this central negotiation bankrupts the local union. And when you get 14 unions all vying with each other in the work place, as you do in a steelworks, that weakens us even more.' Still, with the British Steel Corporation £500 m. in the red and the Government planning to reverse its investment programme in steel, I don't think his role is yet played out.

And so Tom Lewis, unlike many of his free-handed compatriots, but again, with plenty of others like him in this country, puts his money away. What for? A rainy day, the cottage by the sea when he retires? The Lewis's seem indifferent to the things money can buy. When I was talking to them, I was reminded, growing up myself in that same heartland of religiosity and organised labour, that for years as a child I thought that 'being in compliance' (paid up union member) had something to do with chapel. And I can recognise a Welsh Puritan when I meet one.

London Diary

□ One argument that never seems to get resolved is that over a fixed Easter – and I can't begin to think why. Five years ago Easter fell on 22 April; this year it is on 26 March. Where on earth is the sense in it? Neither month may be ideal for weekend holidays but the family setting out for the seaside in March is plainly pushing its luck even further than in April. For a long time it was High Church objections that held up any rational reform; but now even the Roman Catholics are said to be ready to contemplate a fixed Easter. The proposed date is the first Sunday after the second Saturday in April – which, if accepted, would give a bracket merely from 9-15 April. That should make sense even for politicians. Otherwise, with May Day coming into its own as a public holiday this year, they will shortly face the prospect of having created two Bank holidays within a fortnight. I have, however, a secret theory as to why prime ministers seem so reluctant to make the change. Easter for them is all part of the political mystique – the moveable feast you trot out to flummox the press and confound the wisacres over uninformed speculations on either Budget Day or Election Day. Harold Wilson, for instance, is reliably reported to have had the date for Easter in 1970 checked for him the day after he won the 31 March 1966 general election. Much good it did him. I happen to know, however, that Jim Callaghan has already taken the trouble to find out the date of next year's Easter. For the record, it's 15 April – which ought to make 1979 a good year to start on a fixed Easter.

□ Mrs Whitehouse's determination to make trouble for God's sake is proving pretty costly. The original *Gay News* trial at the Old Bailey lost the tax payer at least £10,000; their only partially successful appeal last week another £15,000; when the case goes to the House of Lords it will be another £40,000 or so. But the expense will be worth it, I think, if one thing is established. All judges, addressing juries in criminal cases announce almost as a matter of course 'this is not a court of morals, this is a court of law'. That is precisely what has gone awry in the *Gay News* affair. The Lords of Appeal addressed themselves to people's moral feelings: whether or not the publishers of *Gay News* were, in effect, heretics. If that judgment is overturned in the Lords – or indeed at Strasbourg, whither *Gay News* fully intends to proceed if need be – it will be public money well spent. Meanwhile, at the *Gay News* offices, they are as gay – or should I say cheerful? – as can be expected.

□ A lot of the BBC's top brass have, I hear, been in China. When they get back next month the main item of business burning a hole in their in-trays will be the problem of the BBC's *Nine O'Clock News*. There has been endless debate about its future but no decisions have yet been taken. The main proposal is that it should be moved to seven o'clock, thereby allowing BBC-1

to take a real run at mass audience from 7.30 p.m. onwards. The BBC TV News Department has, however, taken a certain relish in pointing out a snag or two – like the fact that things tend to happen in Parliament in the evening rather than in the afternoon or that East Coast American time happens to be five hours behind ours and that, consequently, 2 p.m. is rather early to expect to bring major news by satellite across the Atlantic. But the principal counter-attack has gone in over money. Even processing domestic film in time for a main seven o'clock bulletin would apparently involve a capital investment in new hardware of something over £1m. Add to that the dismaying discovery (for some) that the long-dreamed-of nightly chat show, complete with dance bands and dancing girls, is estimated to run out at a cost of something like £1½m. – and I'd back the well-known principle of BBC inertia to preserve things as they are.

□ Everyone in Great Turnstile rejoices, at least on personal grounds, over John Hatch's peerage. He was Commonwealth Correspondent of the NS for nearly 20 years – and, indeed, the last piece he contributed to the paper was on the Commonwealth in our Anti-Jubilee issue last June. He had been Commonwealth Officer for the Labour Party for as long, if not longer; and it is from those days that his friendship with the Prime Minister dates. When Jim Callaghan was thrown in at the deep end to be 'shadow' Colonial Secretary in the mid-1950s it was John, above all, upon whom he relied; and it is characteristic that he should have found this way of paying an old debt. Altogether it's not a bad list of 'working peers'. Nothing flashy, nothing glamorous, nothing adventurous – just what you'd expect from our Jim.

□ I wonder, incidentally, whether it was the PM's hand that lay behind the assurance which, according to the *Angling Times*, was given last week to the National Angling Council making it clear that the Labour Party had no quarrel with the nation's amateur fishermen. From the moment that the Labour Party's Home Policy Committee came out with a recommendation to include a promise to abolish blood sports in the next election manifesto, it was pretty plain that there would be trouble ahead. True, only by an elastic stretch of language could 'coarse' fishing be included as a 'blood sport'; but it did not take long to discover that that was precisely the strategy the blood sports' lobby had in mind. I doubt if there are many votes to be lost to the Labour Party on the grouse moors or among the Quorn; but there are a hell of a lot among the ranks of weekend anglers – something that 'Old Fingertips' must have recognised.

□ I met Mr Bhutto only once, and that was in his very elegant home in Karachi. He had, I remember, easily the best library (mainly collected by his father) that I have ever seen in any politician's household. The only thing I didn't fancy was the microphones we each had in front of us while we talked. The reason for that was simple rather than sinister. Most interviews with foreign journalists were at that time

promptly published in the government-controlled press; mine, I'm glad to say, was not. For the most part, however, Mr Bhutto was charm itself – nimble, sophisticated and intelligent and only chilly when I asked him why he had banned a particular weekly paper: 'because,' he said softly, 'it went altogether too far.' The message, at least to me, was clear, even menacing – and we relapsed into pleasantries. Our last exchange, as I was going, was prompted by my noticing a silver-framed photograph of the already disgraced ex-President Nixon. I queried why he still had it on display. 'Let us just say,' came the reply, 'that he was a very unfortunate man.' Not, as it has turned out, quite as 'unfortunate' as poor Mr Bhutto, who now languishes in a condemned cell while his old mate waits to coin in the money from his memoirs in all the comfort of what was once 'the Western White House' at San Clemente.

□ A number of people – well, anyway, the *Church Times* and the *Sunday Telegraph* – seem to be getting into a terrible tizzy over the notion of the Archbishop of Canterbury having to wait till 1.15 a.m. on Saturday morning to deliver his Good Friday message to the nation. When you come to think it, it is a shade discourteous – though by no means as positively insulting to the Archbishop as the 'trailer' I swear I heard last week on BBC-2. In a transparent effort to whip up an audience even in the wee hours we were coyly told that the Archbishop's Holy Week series *Simple Faith?* would provide an answer to 'Everything you always wanted to know about God but were afraid to ask'.

Crucifer

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

□ Judge Leonard was shocked when it was suggested to him at the Old Bailey yesterday that a man on a stabbing charge should not be sent to prison but should become a social worker. – *Guardian* (B. Munro)

□ After dinner the chairman, Mr W. F. Conway, reviewed the activities of the branch during the year, paying particular reference to the senior citizens outing during the summer to Scarborough and how, on the breakdown of one of the buses on the Whitby moors, this had created a spirit of friendship, evoking more letters of thanks to the committee than in previous years. – *Darlington & Stockton Times* (E. J. Bell)

□ At the end of February your colour television licence expires. Would you please renew it promptly? The fee is £21 or that prescribed at the time of application, but registered blind persons pay £1.25 less on production of the Local Authority's certificate. – *Television Licence Reminder* (M. Walker)

□ Mr Bobby Robson, the Ipswich manager – who was criticised by Jimmy Hill on Match of the Day for saying that flamethrowers should be turned on the hooligans – said yesterday that his remark was made 'in the heat of the moment'. – *Guardian* (Ronald Easterby)

Alan Watkins

I was G. E. Moore's Lodger

I early anticipated, or immunised myself against, the recent epidemic of books on the Bloomsbury Group. In the 1950s I read the late Sir Roy Harrod's *Life of Keynes* without once realising that Keynes was a homosexual. This was not surprising. Sir Roy did not see fit to tell me so. I also read the book by J. K. Johnstone (an American, I think) entitled *The Bloomsbury Group*. Then there was Noël Annan's *Leslie Stephen*. And Annan – or, failing him, someone else, though it usually seemed to be Annan – kept up an endless series of talks on the Third Programme which were duly reprinted in the *Listener*. But while I was at Cambridge, from 1951 to 1955, I did not find this knowledge of much utility, whether social or academic. No one asked me to join the Apostles. If there was a key to the secret garden of Cambridge, I had clearly failed to find it.

In 1955, however, I established a slender link with one of Bloomsbury's Cambridge founders – what would a few years ago have been called the *guru* of the group. I came to know G. E. Moore. Even then, I had some notion of Moore's philosophical importance, both in general and in relation to Bloomsbury, even though I had not read his *Principia Ethica*. I knew his views that goodness was a simple, unanalysable quality, like redness, that personal relations were of the highest importance, that we should strive after love, beauty and truth. I did not, as it happened, accept all of it, but this by the way. What I did not realise was the personal awe in which he was held.

Everyone, I later discovered, had been

in fear of his disapproval. Bertrand Russell said that Moore was the only man of whom he had ever been frightened. All this I did not realise at the time. Whether, if I had, I should have behaved any differently towards him, I am not sure. As it was, I did not thrust my views upon him. But I was certainly not afraid to open my mouth in his presence.

Nor was my wife afraid of him. She it was who was responsible for my knowing him at all. What happened was that shortly after I left the university we married. We decided to live in the town. My wife's job was there. And I, being about to be conscripted into the RAF, had no job at all (though, before being called up, I put in a stint at Chivers jam factory, progressing from Christmas puddings to jelly creams). For accommodation she discovered a converted stable, no more than a doll's house really, at the bottom of Moore's garden. He – or, rather, his wife, Dorothy – had another young married couple lodging in the principal house on the Chesterton Road. Moore had a bed sitting-room at the front of the house; Mrs Moore had one at the back. By this I do not mean that their conditions were cramped or uncomfortable. The Chesterton Road house was large and Victorian. But the fact remains that England's greatest living philosopher, already the recipient of the OM, was living in a bed sitting-room and taking in lodgers.

Mrs Moore married Moore when she was a student. By 1955 she was, I should think, in her sixties. She was Scottish, had thick glasses and smoked a pipe, as also did her husband. She called him 'Bill' when talking

to him and 'Moore' to outsiders; as in 'Moore says such-and-such . . .' When the weather was fine he would walk about the garden and Mrs Moore, sitting at a back window, would superintend his progress through opera glasses. This procedure was necessary because of her short sight and because Moore was liable to fall over. He would occasionally lose his balance while striking a flower with his walking-stick. I thought him inconsistent when, some years later, during a visit by my wife and me, he rebuked our three-year-old son for tearing up some flowers in the garden.

His wife took a kindly, maternal and somewhat bossy interest in her tenants. She once insisted on selling us a gate-leg table for £10 on the ground that it was genuine Jacobean. We never discovered whether it was or not. Sometimes she would invite us to tea with Moore and herself. Mrs Moore was voluble, and he confined himself to interjections. She was once talking about a table that some of their previous tenants had bought. Odd how everything to do with Moore seems to come down to tables.

'You see,' she explained, 'they wanted it to have tea on.'

Moore stirred.

'No, no, dear,' he said. 'That's not quite right. Coffee too.'

Occasionally the entertainment was more formal. Tenants, past and present, would be invited to dinner. Moore insisted on grinding the coffee. Afterwards he pressed us to Marsala. My exchanges with him were about politics rather than philosophy. He admired Jim Griffiths. I agreed up to a point but said I thought the we-who-have-toiled-in-the-bowels-of-the-earth routine could be overdone. Moore looked uncomprehending. To him, Jim Griffiths was a good man; he perceived goodness in Griffiths; there was no further argument.

Moore was short, slim, blue-eyed, an inhabitant of fairy-land. He was addicted to hot baths, which he generally had around lunch-time. I do not think he was lonely: his most frequent visitor was Casimir Lewy, the philosopher. The only person about whom I ever heard him speak unkindly was his brother, the poet T. Sturge Moore.

'I wanted to kill my brother,' he said to me. 'He is the only man I have ever wanted to kill.'

'Why was that?'

'You see, I hated him. I have never hated anyone so much as I did my brother.'

Mrs Moore, on the other hand, had a particular detestation of Bertrand Russell. 'Bertie Russell,' she said several times, 'is a bad lot.'

On my asking for further and better particulars, she would merely reply: 'He has caused a lot of unhappiness in his time.'

I suspected she was envious of his greater affluence and popular fame compared to Moore: but this may have been unfair of me.

She continued to send us Christmas cards after our departure, and we – to be exact, my wife – reciprocated. We visited her and Moore several times after leaving Cambridge in 1957. I wish I had talked to him more, but I do not think he would have been very interested. All I can really say is that I was G. E. Moore's lodger.

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Wider Still and Wider

Among life's inconveniences and difficulties, which, for insomniacs in the still watches of the wakeful early mornings, sometimes magnify themselves into a positive cornucopia of nastinesses emptied on to their heads and all of which nastinesses I personally choose to lay at the door of the Supreme Architect (well, He could have prevented them, could He not, if He had wished to?), the problems raised by teeth must rank pretty high. Teeth are nothing but a nuisance from the cradle, where we painfully cut them, to the grave, by which time most of them have equally painfully gone, replaced by dazzling falsities nestling in bright pink gums and clicking their way noisily through the Krunchysnaps and the Jiffyburgers and the creamy Hastimash ('every nourishing globule fashioned from genuine potato').

I have so far been able to avoid a clanking mouthful of manufactured articles, settling instead for the dwindling imperfections supplied to me long ago by Dame Nature, one of which, rather prominently placed, got badly chipped at cricket, a game I played at school because it was compulsory to do so and you were beaten if you didn't. Our wicket-keeper had one day gone down, as we used to phrase it, with pink eye and I volunteered to take his place, not at all minding being rather more in the public eye and assuming that the activities necessary so near the wicket would be more interesting than those required of me at long-stop, a position on the field where one could quite easily have died without being much noticed ('Why is that boy lying down?'). Anxious to display keenness (sucking up to some senior, I don't doubt), I stood, unfortunately, much too close to the stumps and an odious opposing player struck me full in the mouth with his bat. Apologies followed but the conventions of the day made it impossible for me either to blub or, before the game was over, to leave the field for repairs by Matron. My attacker went on to do extremely well in the higher ranks of the civil service. Draw your own conclusions.

Circumstances forced me some ten years ago to change dentists, a happening that bothers the stoutest hearts. I used to go, rather swankily for me, to Harley Street and to the world's best and nicest (and, as it happens, cheapest) dentist. On his sad retirement, the first bill presented to me by his young replacement was so horrifyingly high that I took fright, abandoned the W1 area and daringly placed myself in the hands of the National Health, since when, coupled with efficiency and speed, all has been strangeness and novelty and fascination.

In Harley Street, animated conversation had been *de rigueur*, it being not too easy at times to answer questions with one's mouth chock-a-block with assorted contrap-

tions ('What do you think of Mr Heath?'). Accustomed to this polite exchange of views on politics and the world in general, I attempted chatty overtures of a social nature with my first National Health representative ('Where are you spending your hols?') but they were received in a reproving silence and, to shut me firmly up, he switched on some music, of a sort. The music-dispensing machine was, or so I understood him to say but in my humiliation I may have got it all wrong, a new invention and its sound, unheard by the outside world, passed up the drill and on to my teeth and thence, via various bones inside my head, to my drums. My question as to why it couldn't take the more direct route through the open air went chillily unanswered: he was a little deaf, perhaps, a handy defect for a dentist to possess (all groans and screams inaudible). When the drilling began, I listened attentively and with great difficulty through the whirring noises and the accompanying splashy jets of water, and I could just dimly hear something that, on a good day so to speak and with the wind in the right quarter, could well have been a tuneful selection from *The Desert Song*. Still, I was getting it for free, or nearly so, and I appreciatively and tactfully hummed along for a bar or two. When I first used to leave this dentist's room, he seemed always to hiss something very crossly at me and then slam the door behind me. I had, as is my way, been all courtesy with him, so wherefore such huffiness? Subsequent visits, however, revealed that the hissing and slamming came from one of those door-shutting appliances. Off-putting, all the same.

Passed on, understandably, from one operator to another, I am now in the hands of a nice lady dentist, Miss D, splendidly capable and she cannot be a day over 25. With her, music by-passes my molars and comes straight and loudly into the ear from a transistor permanently tuned to the wild morning jollinesses of Radio 2. And under her attentions and guidance, I entered an entirely new dental world. Gone is the frightening panoply of alarming instruments poised at the ready above one's face and at which one gazed horror-struck, with among them something round and bomb-like and reminiscent of an old-fashioned *machine infernale* destined for a crowned head but which was in reality, I think, merely a counterweight to the cumbersome drill and its attendant propulsive cords. Vanished are the basin, the whirling water, the rinse-please tumbler filled with a reddish prophylactic. Absent is the chair which, pedalled by the dentist, went up and down together with its adjustable head-rest ('There! Is that quite comfortable?'). Instead, in a room at first glance as bare as one recently visited by hard-hearted bailiffs,

I am requested to lie out flat on a sort of extra large oil-clothed surf board and Miss D, sinking down on to a stool, produces with a conjuror's flourish her dental instruments, invisible and therefore unworrying, from somewhere behind me. And away we go.

We are not alone. Seated within six inches of my head is another lady, equally young. A student? An assistant? A friend who has just dropped by and has half an hour to kill before her bus? This one also peers, two heads being better than one I suppose, into my cavities and occasionally lends a hand with a deft squirt of water or a puff of cold air (often so much more painful than the drill). One has therefore to be on the alert for attentions from two quarters. Conversation hardly exists and is strictly limited to the work in hand. In the prone position, swallowing tends to be a bit difficult and convulsive but otherwise all is quickness and efficiency. When all that can be done for my teeth has been done and I have struggled upright, telling myself that I don't feel rather dizzy, Miss D informs me that she will later on wish me to see 'our hygienist'. She, it appears, is booked solid for five weeks and is plainly all the rage. Fresh excitements ahead! I ask what her function is. 'She will scale you and polish you and tell you how to brush your teeth.' At last, at last, and at the age of 67, the information comes not one moment too soon.

I am lucky in that I have never needed to have any real fear of dentists. Many years ago, while living in Northamptonshire, I used to visit in Wellingborough a wonderfully competent and agreeable Scottish dentist called Shearer. It was nothing but a pleasure to go and see him. Examining my teeth in the early days, he was kind enough to pay a polite tribute ('Beautiful work!') to previous tillers in this field. After an extraction, you were encouraged to lie down for a while in a rest room before going home, and tea and biscuits were brought, a prudent measure unavailable on the NHS. If a tooth's future was doubtful, he used to mutter: 'We must put up a wee prayer for this fellow.' His patients were not referred to as such by him. We were not patients but 'mouths'. Conversation flowed. 'One of our most interesting mouths has just returned from France . . . ' 'I was playing golf the other day with one of our mouths . . . ' He held me that he found faces very hard to remember. Meeting in the street somebody vaguely familiar and wishing to place him, he used to ask him to say 'Ah'. When, a little baffled, the unknown obligingly opened his mouth and did so, Mr Shearer would swiftly peer inside and recollect the name in a trice. He has, I am afraid, long since been dead. If there are teeth in heaven, and how else may I ask are we going to eat *foie gras* to the sound of trumpets, I shall make a bee line for him.

He will be, I am afraid, much in demand. I can't think that Mozart could ever have afforded very much in the way of elaborate dental treatment. We know a bit about Elizabeth I's fangs, but what of Goethe's canines? History is woefully silent on the subject of Bacon's gums. But whatever their little troubles, Mr Shearer will be finding them all to be 'fascinating mouths' and I look forward to a tremendous chin-wag.

Letters to the Editor

The Windscale Inquiry

Sir, Jeremy Bugler's incisive critique (NS 10 March) of the Parker report on the Windscale Inquiry does considerable credit to the NEW STATESMAN. The Government's programme of carefully managed 'leaks' and unprecedented pre-publication support for the report's findings has done much to neutralise in advance any critical response. That Mr Bugler was able to find so many flaws in Mr Parker's reasoning perhaps explains why the Government felt it necessary to go to such lengths.

British judicial practice clearly recognises that judges may, from time to time, err in their judgments. For this reason we have an elaborate and much used appeal process. Clearly, in adopting the unusual procedure chosen, Mr Shore felt that Parliament should have an opportunity to review Mr Parker's findings. However, if Mr Parker is right in his interpretation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), this is a valueless concession. Mr Parker argues in support of granting BNFL permission to go ahead that 'to deny reprocessing facilities would be against the spirit - and as I think the letter - of our obligations under the main existing bulwark against proliferation' - the NPT. But if he is correct in this judgment we have no choice under the NPT but to go ahead with reprocessing. Since Mr Shore and the cabinet support Mr Parker's findings we must assume that they agree with his interpretation. In which case the whole process of public inquiry and parliamentary debate begins to look like the charade some people (not FOE) have all along suggested it might be, since the binding decision was actually taken in 1970 with the ratification of the NPT.

Hopefully Mr Parker's judgment is wrong and the MPs' debate on this matter on 22 March will not have been a waste of their time. If he is right, then the efforts of those who have tried to maintain the reasoned approach to the nuclear debate in Britain seem doomed to failure. The tone of Mr Parker's report itself, in marked contrast to that of the Flower's report, has done much already to strengthen the arm of those who want the nuclear debate in Britain to become more aggressive and hostile. If it should turn out that the whole apparently democratic process has been a cheap sham then it is difficult to see what can be done to prevent public anger similar to that already expressed in France, Germany and elsewhere.

TOM BURKE
Director

Friends of the Earth
9 Poland Street
London W1

Mr Begin's Revenge

Sir, The 'idea which types every human being in the state as a colonist and an invader, makes nonsense of the claims about "democratic, secular Palestine"', you say in your leader 'Mr Begin's Revenge' (NS 17 March). Of course it makes nonsense of those claims for they were nothing more than a slogan coined after 1967 as a result of the appalling impression made by Ahmed Shukeiry's 'throw the Jews into the sea' diatribes.

On 8 March 1970 the Beirut newspaper *Al Anwar* published a symposium of leading PLO figures which made this quite clear. It stated that the aim was the setting up of an Arab state of Palestine which would then be re-absorbed into the Arab world as part of a

large federal Arab state. This, taken in conjunction with Article 6 of the Palestine National Covenant which states that only Jews who 'resided in Palestine before the beginning of the Zionist invasion' (defined elsewhere as 1917), would be allowed to remain, and Article 19 which says that the establishment of the state of Israel is illegal 'regardless of the passage of time', shows not only a total refusal to accept any Jewish national rights, but also makes it clear that a Palestine state once established would rejoin the Arab world. This is emphasised by Articles 12 and 13 which say that a separate Palestine identity is only to be preserved until Arab unity is achieved.

From these facts it is very clear that the idea of a separate Palestine state was purely aimed at eliminating Israel. This explains why no attempt was made to set up such a state by the Arab world between 1948 and 1967, when they could have done so without any difficulty. Given these facts Israel's opposition to such a state is obvious.

DAVID M. JACOBS

23 Worley Road
St Albans
Hertfordshire

Roy Campbell and Mosley

Sir, I must refute Corinna Adam's implication (London Diary, 10 March) that my uncle Roy Campbell supported Mosley. As a result of his support of Franco, he was plagued by false accusations until his premature death, despite the fact that he was permanently wounded on active service fighting racialism and fascism in the second world war. W. H. Auden, surely the most important poet among those who boycotted Campbell's work as a result of his support for Franco, lived to concede that Campbell had been right.

May I replace myth with fact? Campbell, on one occasion, accepted an invitation to meet Mosley. He returned, shocked and adamant, locked himself into his workroom, as was his habit during composition, and remained for several days. He was heard shouting 'Never! No! It must never, ever, happen here!' He refused all further invitations to meet Mosley. It is to be hoped that the several forthcoming biographies of Campbell will eventually exonerate him. While deploring Ezra Pound's expressed political views, I must also question Ms Adam's implied suggestion that he was 'not impressive'.

MICHAEL WISHART

Park Farm
Pulborough
Sussex

Voice in the Wilderness

Sir, We have a cousin who came to Israel from Russia in 1973 with his wife, his mother aged 90 years and his daughter. His son, then a boy of 21 years, had served in the army as a private and been discharged as unfit. He was refused a visa to emigrate until five years should have elapsed from his discharge. The parents, facing this appalling choice, left in the belief that he would join them after the five-year period. Meanwhile, the son remained alone in the village, where he lost his job because when one applies for a visa to leave the USSR the right to work is abrogated.

Four years later, in October 1977, he went to the local Ovir office to ask about his visa. He was assaulted and the following day arrested and sentenced to 15 days' imprisonment,

with the threat of a massive sentence if he persisted in his application.

In November his parents, Eda and Isaac Tonkonogi, held a hunger strike at the Western Wall in Jerusalem to protest against the persecution and harassment of their son. They stayed with us during this time. They are working folk, decent and simple people, who had already fasted privately for three days. We told them, in our sophisticated Western way, that a fast in our sorry century was not just to tell God of one's sufferings. So we got the help of the media to come and hear their story and their plea to be reunited with their son. At night the parents came home to us, wracked and exhausted, but, having seen so many people and felt the outpouring of their goodwill, they were heartened: Marek, their son, was no longer anonymous. Friends they did not know they had until then were taking up his cause.

But it is honest to say that until this week Marek was still rather anonymous to us. He was the victim - the loved and missing son - but we had not heard his voice. This week, however, he wrote again to his parents and now he has gained identity and a very courageous one. He writes:

Yesterday I was at the Ovir office; they told me that your request to come to see me will not be granted. I was also very strictly warned that you must cut off all your efforts to release me, and if you will not do this you will gravely harm me, and prolong my stay here. And here in the Soviet Union they will repay your efforts with repressions . . . but I ask you not to stop your efforts.

We hope that NS readers will write to the Soviet Ambassador to explain that the harassment of the innocent and courageous is not the procedure by which a mighty nation gains the respect of the world; and that the desire of an ex-operative of a boot factory to be with his parents is no threat to the fabric of their society. Any support that can be rendered may save a life.

His name and address are: M. Tonkonogi, 16/22 Kirova, Tulchin, Vinnitza, Ukraine, USSR.

PAULINE & MAURICE GABA

Rh. Degania 9
Biet Hakerem
Jerusalem

Engineering Inquiry

Sir, The Government appointed Committee of Inquiry into the engineering profession, of which I am chairman, is anxious to conduct an analysis of the distribution and deployment of men and women with engineering qualifications, covering both those within engineering functions in industry and those now working in quite different areas of activity. In this context we are particularly keen to contact people who qualified as engineers but who are now working in fields where their engineering skills are not directly relevant. May I, therefore, through the columns of your paper, invite such people who are willing to complete a simple, confidential questionnaire, to send their names and addresses to the Secretariat to the Committee at Ashdown House, 123 Victoria Street, London SW1?

MONTY FINNISTON

Ashdown House
123 Victoria Street
London SW1

Getting and Spending

Sir, It was interesting to read the article (NS 10 March) on the Coles 'Getting and Spending' by Mary Morgan. As a teacher at the top of my scale as an honours graduate with over ten years' experience I receive £305 net per

month. (I am in an unpromoted position largely because my experience at secondary and tertiary levels in Africa has been discounted by my Regional Education Authority). My wife does not want to work because she believes in the value of being at home for the children until all four of them are at Secondary School.

Our outgoings per month are as follows:—

	£
Building Society Mortgage	60
Home Improvement Loan	50
Insurance	20
Food and Newspapers	120
Coal	30
Electricity	25
HP on Motorcycle	17
Telephone	13
Rates	8
Petrol	16
Running Costs for Motor Cycle	16
School lunches for eldest daughter	5
	£380

With a net income of £305 the above figures speak for themselves.

M. B. SALE

*Fishers' Holt
Penpont
Dumfries & Galloway*

Who's Right?

Sir, I shall not bother to get bogged down in any discussion of Joan Mackie's doubtful logic in her pseudo-linguistic gymnastics regarding the improper use of the apostrophe (Letters 17 March), but one must take issue with her over the false premises and sloppy conclusion she employs.

False premises, as one can hardly claim that 'any pronoun in English can be used as a substantive'; as a noun by definition is the make of a person, place or thing, and can usually be preceded by an article of either the definite or indefinite variety, this could scarcely be applied to a pronoun which, again by normal definition is a word used *instead* of a noun. This then makes nonsense of her arguments following.

Sloppy conclusion, as in the correct use of English it is not a question of what one prefers, but what is right. It is surely this sort of debasement of the language which the NEW STATESMAN is trying to eradicate through the new column of 'This English' and on which it should be commended.

DAVID WENDON

*4 Corton Road
Lowestoft
Suffex*

Dada Data

Sir, After all the mindless eulogising which surrounded *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed* at the Hayward Gallery, how refreshing to come upon John Spurling's rather more perceptive assessment (NS 24 February). In a wider historical context neither movement was particularly significant as art notwithstanding their current passionate adoption by the pseudo-intellectuals of the establishment — against whom much of their original element of protest was aimed. That subconscious equals significant is an artistic creed which could only have existed in a century uniquely prone to wishy-washy and generally fifth-rate aesthetic thinking.

As an artist I know recently remarked 'Visual jokes and paradoxes occur to most artists while working in their studios. Some having serious work to do rightly reject them, but others, such as Magritte, purely by succumbing to these whims, achieve unjustified reputations as interesting and serious artists.'

To date the best statement on the manifest

shortcomings of Surrealism is still to be found in *The Nature of Art* by Arthur Little (Longmans, Dublin, 1946) where he states:

Meanwhile apart from their materialism . . . two of their essential features seem unsound. One is the assumption that the true mind of man is in the subconscious, as if man were most absent-minded when he is most attentive. . . . And the second unsound principle seems to be based on inaccurate observation. What we have admitted to be a semblance of ecstasy in art seems to be taken by the surrealists as an element of orgy. But orgy and ecstasy are as different as madness is from abnormal sanity, or hallucination from the intense contemplation of the truth. Almost all the contradictions of the theory are latent in the paradox of calling the science of dreams a surrealist, or ultra-realist, science.

GILES AUTY

*49 Medrose Terrace
Penzance
Cornwall*

Sir, John Spurling excelled himself in his comments on the Dada and Surrealism exhibition (NS 24 February). Having dismissed Magritte, whose 'wearily executed conjuring-tricks with appearances don't question reality . . . so much as record the sterility of his own imagination', and Salvador Dali for his 'posturing triviality', he winds up with the gorgeously petty conclusion — 'if Surrealism can be seen as anything but a small comma in the history of art, it is only because so many large ships passed it in the night'. Oh, Dali would have painted that wonderfully.

MICHAEL PALIN

*4 Julia Street
London NW5*

Second Viennese School

Sir, A paragraph in A. J. P. Taylor's London Diary of 3 March contains one of the most pernicious fallacies ever to play havoc with the development and appreciation of any form of art. He says it is up to the musical public to fill the QE Hall to the brim when the La Salle string quartet gives its series of concerts devoted to the Second Viennese School because even if Schoenberg is not exactly Schubert, he and Webern have had a tremendous influence on the shape and sound of music in our day. Hitler had an enormous influence on shaping events in our time. Does that mean we should all be flocking to worship at his shrine if surviving Nazis and neo-Nazis had been allowed to erect one?

G. REICHARDT

*13 Hanover Court
Wyebank View
Tutshill, Chepstow*

Sovereignty in the EEC

Sir, On 13 January 1978 you published a letter from Mr J. Kilner of Leeds claiming that 'a recent EEC directive' had made James Fenton's little purses of chocolate sovereigns no longer available in this country. May I reassure your readers that this is not so? I enclose for your own enjoyment a little purse which I purchased at a well-known British chain store.

RICHARD MAYNE

Head of UK Offices.

*Commission of the European Communities
20 Kensington Palace Gardens
London W8*

Saharan Action Committee

Sir, We would like to inform your readers about the newly-established Sahara Action Committee, which is campaigning for the right

of the people of Western Sahara to freedom and self-determination.

Over the past few years the NEW STATESMAN has published a number of valuable articles on the subject by John Gretton. Most impartial observers have deplored the take-over of this former Spanish colony by the neighbouring Arab states of Morocco and Mauritania — who invaded it at the end of 1975 in defiance of the decisions of the UN and the International Court of Justice. The Saharan people fought the Spanish colonisers, and they are now fighting the new invaders. Their national movement, Polisario, has recently suffered air attacks by French forces, and this intervention has intensified the regional conflict.

We appeal to all who are concerned for the human and political rights of the Saharan people to lend us their active support.

ROGER HARDY.
Co-ordinator.

*Sahara Action Committee
9 Poland Street
London W1*

Denmark's Women

Sir, I have learned from the Danish Ministry of Justice that Donald Gould's extraordinary assertion (NS 3 March) that Danish law requires the sterilisation of women with an IQ of less than 75 is balderdash.

W. N. BROWN

*Ahlmann's Allé 11
2900 Hellerup
Denmark*

Tom Mann

Sir, I am writing a biography of the trade union leader Tom Mann (1856-1941). May I appeal to any NEW STATESMAN readers who knew him or who have any photographs or letters to contact me? All material would of course be returned on completion.

NICHOLAS BENNETT

*235 Devonshire Road
London SE2*

Oral Bawdry

Sir, Last century Francis James Child published an anthology containing around 1,000 versions of 305 ballad-stories, thus preserving in print the great tradition of oral balladry. I have been commissioned to edit a similar collection of oral bawdry, to gather together the sort of amorous verse (and song) which has hitherto circulated by word-of-mouth and, occasionally, in well-thumbed typescripts. Obviously a book of this kind requires the co-operation of the public so I'd like to appeal to readers of the NS to send me any examples of popular bawdy verse known to them.

ALAN BOLD

*Balbirnie Burns East Cottage
Markinch
Fife*



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BOOKS IN GENERAL

John Keegan

Catch-23

War on the Mind: The Military Uses and Abuses of Psychology by PETER WATSON
Hutchinson £9.95

During 1973 Peter Watson, a psychologist on the staff of the *Sunday Times*, began an inquiry into the use of psychological warfare by the British army in Ulster. His early reading in the history of the subject, enlivened though it was by details of the 'disintegration of morale in the Wehrmacht' and 'the delicate art of rumour-mongering', did nothing to alter his belief that conflict research promised a great deal more than it had delivered and was 'intellectually a barren field'. As his inquiries broadened, however, he began to modify his view and, after a visit to the John F. Kennedy Centre for Military Assistance, he changed it altogether. For there he found 'row upon row of (largely unpublished) reports of military experiments which together showed the full extent of the way psychology had in recent years been adapted for the purpose of war making'. He eventually identified 7,500 major studies and the existence of 146 military psychology research institutes, 130 of them in the US. It is out of the mass of material they have assembled in the last 30 years that Mr Watson has constructed this elephantine, diffuse and deeply misleading book.

His outline of the range of research subjects on which governments will spend money (\$16m. in the US in 1974-75) is nevertheless hair-raising: the training of whales to recover experimental torpedoes from the depths and of pigeons fitted with missile-attracting devices to settle on tanks; the isolation of smells offensive to South East Asians so that guerrillas may be stunk out of their jungle refuges; the cataloguing of dates held unpropitious by Buddhists, who may thus be caught at prayer instead of at the front; human misperception of the range, colour and contour of ships and vehicles; the anthropology of warlike tribes recruited as counter-guerrillas; the construction of a universal 'limited language' with which monoglot privates may interrogate aliens; the selection of spies by, for example, their skill in matching 44 pairs of forms and designs; and the psychometric measurement of enemy morale (which led the Rand Corporation to conclude just before the Tet offensive that the Vietcong were on the point of breaking).

Mr Watson's first purpose is to demonstrate how ludicrous much of this research is. Few will dissent. But those who struggle through his 40 pages of absurdities culled from the archives of American psychological warfare institutes may feel that the point has already been better put in two paragraphs of *The Last Days of Hitler*. 'In one department of [Himmler's] foreign in-

telligence service', wrote Hugh Trevor-Roper, 'a school of eager researchers studied such important matters as Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry, the symbolism of the suppression of the harp in Ulster, and the occult significance of Gothic pinnacles and top-hats at Eton', while Schellenberg ('an admirer, a despairing admirer of the British intelligence service') learned from 'those amazing novelettes which filled the reference library of the Gestapo' how it had

secured the otherwise unaccountable success of British diplomacy and politics, and, operating through the YMCA and the Boy Scout Movement, had overthrown dynasties, altered governments and assassinated inconvenient ministers throughout the world. To create such a universal, totalitarian intelligence service was his ambitious dream.

Given such precedents, it is scarcely surprising that the Rand Corporation should have proved as inept at interpreting the state of enemy morale for Westmoreland as Halder for Hitler in Russia in 1941 or Charteris for Haig in Flanders in 1917, the latter both by simple guesswork.

Mr Watson's second purpose is to describe the dangerous advances psychologists have made in the science of selecting and manipulating humans and animals for warfare. But here again his reading does not seem to have carried him much further than the end of the shelf in the Human Resources Research Office. His above-mentioned account of the training of intelligence agents is reminiscent of a much better-written passage in *Kim*, is indeed a description of Kim's Game, familiar to generations of Boy Scouts (hence perhaps Schellenberg's suspicion of the movement), while his 'limited language' was in everyday use a century ago in the Austro-Hungarian army, which required each soldier of the ten-language empire to know 64 words of German. Anthropological research, ineptly essayed by the Yale Human Resources Research File, was the constant concern of officers of the British-Indian Army, who quelled the Indian Mutiny largely by using ethnic enemies against each other, and the recruiting handbooks they wrote on the 'martial races' remain among the best guides available to ethnologists;

Among this week's contributors:

JOHN KEEGAN is the author of *The Face of Battle*; he is Senior Lecturer in War Studies at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst.

PAUL ADDISON lectures in History at the University of Edinburgh. His most recent publication is *The Road to 1945* and he is currently engaged on a study of Churchill.

CLAIRE TOMALIN is working on a biography of Katherine Mansfield.

that on the Gurkhas is still in use and kept up to date.

Animals have, of course, played a major part in warfare ever since the first warrior threw a leg across a horse, and they were given arcane roles years before any American behaviourist taught a pigeon to peck a picture of a missile-launcher. Both sides in the first world war used hawks to attack carrier-pigeons (which one sanguine French scientist fitted with miniature cameras), as presumably modern armies would do again if pigeons were taught new tricks. As for expensive experiments in perceptions of colour and contour, Norman Wilkinson, the marine artist, made all the major discoveries in his invention of camouflage 'dazzle painting' in the quiet of his studio in 1916, at the cost of a little oil and canvas. These principles were applied to land warfare during the second world war by the landscape artist Edward Seago, who also lived in General Alexander's mess and entertained his commander with civilised conversation, not something likely to be enjoyed with the polysyllabic denizens of the Cultural Information Analysis Centre.

Mr Watson's third purpose is to rend the veil of secrecy concealing what he regards as some very nasty studies into desensitisation and the direction of aggression. And here he does have one or two disturbing revelations, notably about an American naval doctor who clamped servicemen's heads and propped open their eyes while showing them horrific films, with the object of inducing 'those who might not be inclined to kill to do so under certain circumstances'. It is significant that this is the only revelation which the Pentagon has taken the trouble to deny. Applying the Muggidgean principle that news is anything anyone wants to suppress, everything else being public relations, it does look as if here the author has stumbled on a secret.

But the real secret about war, which is buried in this book under a mountain of irrelevancies about weapon-pointing, interrogation, codebreaking and Arctic survival, is much nastier than anything the author has to disclose, is very, very old and is the common property of the freemasonry of soldiers. It is that the central act of warfare, battle, is so unpleasant, so degrading, so terrifying that the majority of men will do almost anything to avoid it if they can — certainly a whole range of things, from emigration to self-mutilation, that they would not contemplate doing to avoid the very worst of the battle simulations which the book describes. So dreadful is battle that, though leadership and group-loyalty can be invoked to offset man's natural instinct to run away from it, all armies ultimately depend upon the naked and brutal principle of coercion.

There is an indirect endorsement of this simple but overwhelming truth in Mr Watson's proposition of a 'Catch-23': that the really clever soldiers buck the psychologists' selection systems to find jobs which will keep them away from battle before it begins. The cleverest may deduce, if they persist with Mr Watson's prose, that the safest place of all will be in one of his 146 research institutes. Except that they might just die laughing at the credulity of those who buy their conclusions.

Claire Tomalin

Patron Saint

E. M. Forster: A Life, Vol. II by P. N. FURBANK *Secker & Warburg* £7.50

Dorothy Parker, not much given to reverence, said in the 1950s that she'd go on hands and knees to reach E. M. Forster. If she had it might have flustered him; but it was an improvement on earlier Americans who had been inclined to congratulate him on his Hornblower books. By now he had become a figure to be 'honoured for personal goodness and sanctity'. He was old – in his seventies – and he had lived through a period of amazing political upheavals and *volte-faces* among intellectuals without shifting from his own consistently humane and temperate standpoint. P. N. Furbank suggests that the word 'holiness' had crept into some friends' views of him. An agnostic saint? Certainly his physical presence in Cambridge had its awe-inspiring aspect; he would appear in the front court of King's rather like an ancient, sacred tortoise who might decide to snap or draw in his head. One knew the wisdom was stored inside.

Lionel Trilling's wartime study praised Forster's work for going beyond the limitations of the liberal imagination, but put the emphasis squarely on his reliability:

He is one of the thinking people who were never led by thought to suppose they could be more than human and who, in bad times, will not become less.

Without raising his voice (literally: he was wholly inaudible at a European writers' conference in 1935) or adopting a mandarin style, he had established his views on race, militarism, the Empire, the public schools, class, nationalism, business ethics, sexual orthodoxy and indeed most of the large issues of his time. He had taken on the burdens of the public man of letters, fighting with the BBC during one of its red-scare periods (1931), presiding over the National Council for Civil Liberties, signing joint letters protesting at book censorship, active for a while in the PEN club; but he had never grown what Coleridge, speaking of Wordsworth, called a 'moral film over the eye'.

Still, Mr Furbank's Forster is not a secular saint. He is a tetchy, honourable, mostly endearing creature. One of the virtues of this book – and the second volume is still more enjoyable than the first – is the dry affection with which it is written. Furbank never deflates his subject; his personal feeling for the man is clear, though not obtrusive, and his own diary notes have been a valuable source. But he looks straight at the less pleasing aspects of Forster's personality: his misogyny, for instance, which led him to accuse women of wanting to destroy men's club life, while at the same time objecting to the idea of female homosexuality on the grounds that they shouldn't try to do without men. It also made him refuse Leonard Woolf's request that his wife

should be allowed to read his homosexual novel *Maurice* and then complain that her critical estimate of his work was based on insufficient knowledge of it. Women were to him at best 'a sort of rich subsoil' in which to rest and grow – this was his phrase for his tyrannous old mother. At worst they might be labelled 'rubbishy little creatures', as Evie was in *Howard's End*.

A central theme of this book is inevitably Forster's experiences as a homosexual, which led him into some curious scrapes and guilty feelings as well as contentment. Like Isherwood (who was very frank about this in *Christopher and his Kind*) he was drawn only to young men of lower classes or different cultures; thus, although there might be much friendliness between him and his loves, there was never equality. Nor was he ever able to enact what he imagined

in his fiction, the setting up of a domestic life with a partner. He enjoyed being the benefactor and educator. No doubt he saw a great difference between paid encounters with male prostitutes arranged by sympathetic friends and tender, long affairs. It is moving to read of his happiness when he met the policeman, Bob Buckingham, and believed himself loved, in his early fifties. But there was still a strong element of patronage, even though it came to include friendly patronage of Mrs Buckingham too. One can't help feeling distinctly uneasy about the account of this affair, partly because Buckingham himself – incredibly – denied that he was aware of Forster's homosexuality; and also because of the element of cruelty and exploitation which is clear in a letter from Sebastian Sprott to Forster in which he urges him to do everything he

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can to lure Buckingham away from his newly-confined wife:

'She is so miserable when I am away.' And so on. Well then you have a nice line in counter-arguments, and among them FREEDOM, which is much thought of by any who want to appear modern.

It is clear that both Buckingham and his wife to a degree had their heads turned by being introduced into Forster's world; but the situation settled down into a fairly stable and happy one, with Forster godfather to their son and benefactor to the whole family.

Mr Furbank picks his way through these difficult areas without being coy or sensational: a triumph of his own sense and good feeling. He is also deft and funny describing Forster's running battle with his aristocratic neighbours in Surrey over footpath rights. But the two most absorbing sections of the book are probably the foreign ones. During World War I Forster, more or less a pacifist, got himself Red Cross voluntary work in Alexandria, visiting wounded British soldiers in hospital. Here he met Cavafy, studied Egyptian history, enjoyed his work and the sunshine but felt lonely until he fell in love, romantically, with a tram conductor called Mohammed, and saw through his eyes the horrors of colonialism. Furbank shows that *A Passage to India* owes something to Forster's Egyptian experiences as well as to India, where he went after the war to be secretary to the Maharaja of Dewas, taking part in the preposterous intrigues and rituals of the court. He returned to England deeply depressed and wrote apropos the half-finished novel:

When I began the book I thought of it as a little bridge of sympathy between East and West, but this conception has had to go, my sense of truth forbids anything so comfortable. I think that most Indians, like most English people, are shits, and I am not interested whether they sympathise with one another or not. Not interested as an artist; of course the journalistic side of me still gets roused over these questions.

From this account it is Forster the journalist, not Forster the artist, who has been most acclaimed. Forty years later, when the book was dramatised, he again denied that he had written about the incompatibility of East and West, saying he was really concerned with 'the difficulty of living in the universe', as Furbank noted in his diary.

The implied verdict is that Forster himself managed it better than most. His lapses have rather the air of a spoilt only child's lapses, and did little damage. He was generous and loyal; he lived with what seemed a dangerous secret handicap in his generation, albeit an exciting one. Even though he stopped writing novels – nervous of his own success, suggests Furbank – his fame grew. And he never lost his descriptive powers. Nine years before his death he nearly died of a blood deficiency; he wrote:

Only weakness, and too weak to be aware of anything but weakness. 'I shan't be here if I get any weaker than this' was the nearest approach to a thought . . . Bob's little finger pressed mine and pursued it when it shifted. This I shall never forget.

It is good to know that when the real time came it was marked by the same calm and affection.

Paul Addison

East is East

Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain and the War against Japan, 1941-1945 by

CHRISTOPHER THORNE *Hamish Hamilton* £15

Christopher Thorne's book ranges across the entire Far East to encompass China and Japan, the far-flung archipelagos of the Pacific, Australia and New Zealand, South East Asia, and British India in its final days. The second world war worked its way through this part of the globe like a hurricane reshaping the destiny of its peoples, and drawing into the eye of the storm both the British and the Americans. And it is the British and Americans who provide Thorne with his subject. For all his grasp of the drama as a whole, for all the intriguing glimpses he gives us of Chiang Kai-shek or Mao Tse-tung, his main aim and his main achievement is to illuminate the character of Anglo-American relations. Who would have thought that so many home truths could be brought back from Asia?

Not many people have thought deeply about the Anglo-American alliance during the second world war, for there has never seemed very much to think about. From one point of view the story is clear enough: no two allies have ever been so close as Britain and the US in the struggle against Hitler. In spite of the long argument over the timing of the Second Front, or the mixed emotions aroused by the presence of GIs in the high street, the dominant theme was unity of purpose. In many respects the two governments merged into one, pooling scientific and economic resources and jointly planning grand strategy. There seemed also to be shared values at stake: a common heritage of representative government and the rights of the individual, a cultural tie between English-speaking peoples, for some even a sense of kith and kin. At the very top Churchill and Roosevelt (who were indeed seventh cousins once removed, but then again perhaps most of us are), behaved like boon companions quietly arranging a weekend's fishing.

Yet Britain and the US were also partners in a very different kind of war against Japan – and east of Suez we seem to pass Through the Looking Glass. In the West, Britain and the US were to enter Europe as genuine liberators from Nazi tyranny. In the Far East, in spite of all their protestations to the contrary, both were agents of white supremacy and imperial control. The British held India in thrall, while Attlee was no less keen than Churchill to restore colonial rule in Malaya and Singapore. The Americans believed all too naively in spreading the American way of life among benighted peoples, a motive which went hand in hand with an eager search for new export markets and investment opportunities, not to speak of the plans of the US Navy for annexing various Pacific

islands which belonged to friendly nations. Racist attitudes were common among American and British governing circles alike, leading both powers to underestimate the potential danger from Japan before the outbreak of war. The 'dwarf slaves', wrote the head of the British Foreign Office, would never dare to strike at British possessions. The catastrophes of Pearl Harbor and Singapore were, in part, the consequence of such attitudes. The Japanese too assumed that the war had a racial character, and posed as liberators of Asia from the Europeans, a threat that was fully appreciated in both London and Washington. Churchill spoke forebodingly of a 'Pan-Asian malaise spreading through the bazaars of India', and the Americans were all the more determined to prop up Chiang Kai-shek as the true embodiment of Asian aspirations.

Historians of international relations have tended in the past to write rather narrowly about the formal transactions of diplomats and politicians, ignoring the luxuriant undergrowth of attitudes and emotions in which such activity has its roots. But one of Thorne's many qualities is an acute awareness of the deeper levels. No one else has ever remarked before on the 'ugly racialism' of Winston Churchill, but Thorne goes some way to proving it, quoting him, for example, on the coloured people of the Empire: 'What those people need is the sjambok.' This extra insight enables Thorne to demonstrate vividly not only the common arrogance of the British and the Americans, but the tensions and rivalries between them. For east of Suez the two nations were competitors as well as allies. The Americans made no secret of the fact that they intended to inherit not only the white man's burden but his trade and investments. Hence the atmosphere in Chungking or New Delhi tended to be thick with suspicion whenever British and American representatives rubbed shoulders. Thorne has ingeniously reconstructed what each side said about the other behind their backs; and careful though he is to avoid exaggeration the result is by any reckoning a golden treasury of prejudice.

On balance it was the Americans who revealed the greater hostility. Nourished on the legends of 1776, they still dreamed of themselves as a plucky little people standing up for liberty against the British Empire and its despotic ruling class. Encounters with supercilious public-school types tended to bring them out in a rash, as when General Stilwell recorded in his diary:

Monocled ass at lunch: 'One does enjoy a cawk-tail doesn't one? It's so seldom one gets the chawnc. In my own case I hardly have time for a glaahs of bee-ah.'

Apart from a handful of Anglophiles, the American officials and senior officers were convinced that the British were running an underhand political war for imperial advantage. Even Roosevelt was eloquent on the theme, telling Churchill to his face: 'You have 400 years of acquisitive instinct in your blood and you just don't understand how a country might not want to acquire land somewhere if they can get it.' For their part the British observed that American officers in the Far East were

often peacetime representatives of big corporations, and suspected with good reason a major commercial offensive.

Not surprisingly the British and the Americans ran largely separate war efforts in the Far East, and where they did combine, in South East Asia Command, relations were fraught. The US Navy under Admiral King wanted to exclude the Royal Navy from the war in the Pacific, and largely succeeded: Japan became an American fief where MacArthur distributed bibles to convert the inhabitants to Christianity. The Americans rebuked the British for failing to treat China as a great power or Chiang Kai-shek as the saviour of his country. In fact the British weighed up Chiang realistically enough as the boss of a corrupt and ineffectual regime which lived by fleecing a credulous government in Washington. The future of the British and other European empires in the Far East was also a bone of contention. There was intermittent pressure from the US to speed up colonial development or hand over the colonies to US trusteeship, and Churchill took a lot of stick in the American press for his reactionary line on India. When an emissary from Roosevelt suggested to Churchill in 1945 that Hong Kong be presented to Chiang Kai-shek, Churchill 'took him up with violence . . . and said that we would never yield an inch of territory under the British flag'.

It is tempting to quote excessively from *Allies of a Kind*, for Thorne has unearthed a glittering array of material. He combines the cold qualities of control and the warm qualities of passion and imagination which flow together in the making of first-class history. As a writer he is cool, patient and judicious, never reaching a verdict without a meticulous reckoning of the pros and cons. Yet the overall effect is far-reaching: the most searching, the most imaginative, and the most radical analysis we have yet had of the relations between John Bull and Uncle Sam in the 20th century. Individuals are penetratingly and often severely assessed, and woe betide anyone whom Thorne discovers to have been two-faced, imperipient, unwilling to plan ahead, corrupt, irresponsible, or racially prejudiced. Roosevelt takes a tumble on every one of these counts, while his ambassador to China, Patrick Hurley, is dismissed as 'a braggart and a liar'. Others, like poor Dorman-Smith, a very decent governor of Burma upon whom great men wiped their feet, are raised from the dust to a place of honour. Churchill survives in an interesting way, as a very great man with very great warts. Yet he and the rest are also seen against a wide panorama of events where they dwindle away into specks on the horizon. Although the Japanese lost the war in the short run, they also won it in the long run: they brought the downfall of four centuries of European supremacy in the East.

I would like to have learnt more about the motives and dynamics of the Japanese from Thorne's book, for it was they who released the chain-reaction he describes. Were they in any sense the liberators of Asia, or were they as I have always assumed suffering from the same disease as Nazi

Germany, and intent only on the reduction of neighbouring peoples to slavery? It can also be said that Thorne is hard pressed to sustain his thesis about Anglo-American rivalry, which tended to die away at the end of the war as a *modus vivendi* was reached, and the two imperialisms merged in order to fight the Cold War. But his book is without doubt a superb achievement, an original contribution on the grand scale to the overall reassessment of the second world war which is now in progress. The war served a generation of Britons

and Americans as a myth which enshrined their essential purity, a parable of good and evil. Even now some will find it difficult to accept that many Asian politicians regarded us as the oppressors and the Japanese as heralds of emancipation, or to admit that age-old European prejudices about race were still a motive force. Hitler and the Nazis may remain as black as any propagandist ever painted them, but the allied war effort is decomposing into a mass of grey, ambiguous conduct – self-knowledge at last?

Lorna Sage

The Last Trump

An Essay on Hardy by JOHN BAYLEY Cambridge £6.95

John Bayley quotes a poem in which Hardy makes the dead in one of his favourite churchyards parodically pray not to be resurrected – 'That no God trumpets us to rise/We truly hope'. Fifty years at rest, and buried in two places (unless, as anecdote has it, the cat got his heart), Hardy must be thinking uneasily along the same lines. Is he to put himself together and join the immortals after all, the great respectabilities (the great tradition), converse for eternity with George Eliot and Henry James after so long hovering cannily in the limbo of good bad writing, set texts, classic serials and critical condescension? Though Professor Bayley is aware of the problem – that what is so marvellous about the writing is precisely that it offends the usual critical pieties about coherence and integrity – he himself is of course sabotaging Hardy's oddness in acclaiming it. Not that he's playing God, but this book does have an echo of the last trump about it, summoning Hardy's disintegrated opus to take its place among the securely saved.

It has to, because his particular qualities are ones we are very short of, and because (unlike the great extrovert Victorians) he seems to have fore-glimpsed our poverty, and yet to have kept it at bay. In his novels, he was on the very brink of unillusion and self-consciousness – of that lonely, familiar, inevitable egoism which in contemporary fiction makes character and scene the mere reflex of the author's preoccupations, and which in criticism has coined terms like 'fictivity' – and still he contrived (or happened) to sustain the freedom and otherness of his creations. Bayley uses John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman* to make the point: 'it is not event and narration that Mr Fowles's novel offers us, but a shadow image of the author's own vision. His woman is an "idea" to herself, as she is to him', whereas Hardy, by taking refuge in 'the division of roles the age offered – the private, the literary, the social – like a deer in the thickets . . . becomes more subtle in his openness than the novelist who can claim to throw all that sort of thing away.' Because of Hardy's inhibition,

'a nature incorrigibly isolated and unpretending', and because of his distance from his readers ('a literary version of the class barrier', whereas Fowles slums), his characters *can* be free of him. He is often most interested in people who are opaque to him, Bayley points out, and shows a rare disinclination to favour 'those whom he recognises'.

Hardy does somehow fit the bill, and does provide the right antidote to the collusive, over-knowing tone of contemporary novel-writing. The early novels, indeed, will never recover from Bayley's brilliant revalu-

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ation; no longer will *Desperate Remedies* or *A Pair of Blue Eyes* rest in peace outside the critical precincts. He finds in them such impressive and enticing fragments – a train in a woodland cutting breaking consciousness to shards, a bungled kiss revealing an imagination 'saturated' in the divisions of sex and class – that they are bound, now, to follow each other like good sheep into the canon. His style of analysis, which is ruminative rather than (like Empson's) incisive and impatient, exactly suits the discontinuities of Hardy's style, where high-flown allusions (advertising the auto-didact) coexist peaceably with rusticities, clichés, neologisms and terms of art. On *Far From the Madding Crowd* he's especially persuasive, showing exactly how Hardy sleep-walks into that extraordinary scene in a hollow in the ferns, where Troy mesmerises Bathsheba with his sword exercise – a scene that begins as it means to go on, with a hanging participle ('Standing in the centre, the sky overhead was met . . .'), and juxtaposes heroic hyperbole with the most dimly prosaic manoeuvres ('It may safely be asserted . . .'), to produce an altogether surprising erotic accuracy. No small part of the pleasure is derived from 'the perverse way in which Hardy's effectiveness creeps round normal standards of judgment', and so enables his critic to live dangerously as well.

At moments, one might be forgiven for thinking that Bayley is too obviously intrigued by the opportunities for critical paradox. Certainly he enjoys demonstrating the effectiveness of breaking the rules, but he's seldom just wilful. A degree of perversity is thrust upon him, since he wants – rightly, but perhaps vainly – to insist upon Hardy's uniqueness at the same time as fitting him into literary high society. The particular qualities of mind and style he tracks down are really there, though it's extremely difficult to describe them:

The text is like a landscape of which

the component parts – cows, birds, trees, grass – pay no attention to one another, although they appear as a total composition to the beholder, the reader.

Or again, 'even the syntax . . . seems not to know what other clauses and phrases are about'. It's a special case, he suggests, of 'imitative form', though not 'a deliberate method which exploitation is liable to render facile', as in Virginia Woolf. Hardy hits upon it not so much as a result of literary logic or ambition as because of his idiosyncratic response to the loss of faith – his refusal to synthesise a new coherence out of nature and the moral imagination, as Matthew Arnold and George Eliot did, so that he sticks to the old forms and conventions, but doesn't regard them as explaining, or interpenetrating with, his people and scenes at all.

So, to arrive at the book's major paradox, it is by himself playing 'God' – devising ironic plots and impossible points of view, ignoring his characters' claims for attention and keeping himself to himself – that Hardy creates his special illusion. 'Consciousness', writes Professor Bayley, paraphrasing him, 'can never be at one with the world it inhabits': hence the gaps, disjunctions and divisions that give author, characters and readers a decent independence. Using Hardy's capacity for 'looking away' as a yardstick, he discerns indeed smugness and meddling consciousness in some unexpected places – Larkin, for instance, or Robert Frost ('how deliberately the extreme simplicity invites the recognition that this is really a very complex thing'). Dickens and Thackeray by comparison are *crudely* inconsistent, and Flaubert 'could not possibly have arranged for such exuberance to catch him unawares'. It's an exhilarating inversion of critical good form, disinterring *Two on a Tower* to put George Eliot in her place, setting *Neutral Tones* on Robert Browning, and a characteristic triumph of professorial know-how on Bayley's part.

Where I lose touch with him is on *Tess* and *Jude*. It may be inevitable that rediscovering the early novels means you develop suspicions about the later ones ('the coarse scale he took pleasure in increasingly') but I can't see why. Perhaps, as his tone sometimes suggests, he's constitutionally averse to tragedy. More likely, it is the fact that, as he says, Hardy by that time had become (alas) *conscious* of his own wayward habits of perception: there's an extraordinary italicised sentence – '*Clare is experiencing as a personal drama the sense of Tess which for the reader is a sense of the book's form*' – which implies that for Bayley 'imitative form' has now reached its apogee and terminal point. He writes here as though (for all his contempt for rules) it has become a rule that self-consciousness must be sterile. It follows that *Jude* alienates him in an ordinary and unexciting way, and Sue Bridehead is the only Hardy heroine he doesn't conduct a humorous love-affair with (she might almost be a Fowles fantasy). However, the book's negative judgments won't stick. Its positive claims, on the other hand, will: Thomas Hardy will be not merely eminent, but critically respectable in perpetuity, and we shall all find ourselves, like Professor Bayley, using phrases like 'unbothered unawareness' as terms of praise.

Anthony Howard

The Rest is Silence

Jean's Way by DEREK HUMPHRY with Ann Wickett *Quartet* £4.95

Those who have long maintained that death is the great unmentionable 20th-century subject may need to think again. Not so long ago Mr Victor Zorza took a large part of one Saturday's *Guardian* to give an account of how his 25-year-old daughter prepared herself to die; and now another journalist, Derek Humphry of the *Sunday Times*, comes forward with a book describing how his 42-year-old wife – also a cancer victim – came to 'make her peace with death'. For that is what *Jean's Way* is really about – rather than the final prearranged act by which its subject took her own life. Probably it was inevitable that the notion of a husband acting as accessory to his wife's suicide would be what attracted the television producers; but in lending himself to that kind of presentation (indeed encouraging it – the last two pages of his book comprise a statement of the present law on 'aiding and abetting suicide') Mr Humphry has risked not merely police intervention but public misunderstanding.

Basically his story is no different from Mr Zorza's. How does a family react when a death sentence is effectively passed on one of its members. Of course, out of the mouths of doctors that rarely happens with quite the brutal abruptness (three weeks from the date of sentence) that it used to do at the hands of judges. Mrs Humphry had a mastectomy at the beginning of 1973 but it was not until May 1974 that her local GP broke the news, though not directly to her, that she must expect to die before the end of the year. Like most medical forecasts, this proved to be wrong; Mrs Humphry in fact lived until the Saturday before Easter of the following year (1975).

The pact to allow her 'to die on my own terms and exactly when I choose' was made pretty early on – two months after the sentence and six months before, at her request, her husband supplied her with the mug of coffee containing a lethal dose of pain killers and sleeping pills. Once the agreement had been made between them, it was never spoken of again until the moment came for it to be put into operation: it takes up no more than a dozen pages of what is anyway a very short book. The rest is simply a narrative description of how two people, very close to each other, came to adjust to the knowledge that, while one of them would survive, the other was bound to die within a finite period.

On the whole Mr Humphry avoids mawkishness. His book could all too easily have turned into a rerun of Erich Segal's *Love Story* for the middle-aged market – and at least it avoids that. Nor, however, is it wholly successful as an evocation of someone who was plainly a very exceptional

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person – and for that Mr Humphry has only himself to blame. He will keep getting in the way – whether in talking about his own 'career approaching its peak', his 'hectic professional life', or, worst of all, his extra-mural love life ('the affair was immensely pleasurable and infinitely relieving' – in fact it was a two-night stand). Reticence may be an old-fashioned virtue but there remains a great deal to be said in its favour; for one thing, it always provided a splendid insur-

ance against the risk of self-advertisement.

And that, I suppose, has ultimately to be one's reservation about this book, a reservation that for me at least was crystallised by the pictures on the front and back covers of the dustjacket. The former shows Mr Humphry's first wife, Jean; the latter his present wife (and co-author), Ann. Nothing offensive about that – just something that in the bad old days of 'reticence' could never have happened.

Julian Barnes

Farce Talking

Madder Music by PETER DE VRIES *Gollancz* £3.95

The Throwback by TOM SHARPE *Secker & Warburg* £4.50

All writers recycle material, comic writers probably more than most. 'The murals in restaurants are on a par with the food in museums,' gags a layabout versifier, given to prepared impromptu, in *Madder Music*; and De Vries, via his hero, comments that the remark is 'reversible, like the raglan that could double as a raincoat by being turned inside out'. Sure enough, a hundred or so pages later, the hero finds himself in the restaurant of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, needing an ear-catching line with which to impress a beautiful girl . . .

It's all done knowingly, of course, with the reader a sly party to the recycling; and De Vries has been at it for years. In his latest novel, though, he's found an additional way of making economies which you can't help admiring. What does the comic novelist do with his slightly substandard cracks, his creative overmatter? Sometimes, of course, he just bungs them in anyway (a complaint voiced against De Vries himself in recent years). In *Madder Music* he gets round the problem by loading down his hero, Robert Swirling, with even more guilts and woes than De Vries protagonists are usually heir to, so that the poor sap loses his marbles and winds up believing that he's – not Napoleon or God – but Groucho Marx. And the second-rate De Vries crack is well up to a first-rate Marx Brothers script. So critics who balked last time round at lines in *I Hear America Swinging* like 'He has a Beaune to pick with his vintner' can now only be disarmed by a greasepaint-moustached fugitive from reality who quips away about 'putting Descartes before de hearse'. It's hard not to hear too a background rumble from De Vries himself, always a self-aware writer: it is the happy chuckle of a thrifty man.

Apart from this device, there aren't any great surprises about this latest novel; and with De Vries now in his mid-sixties, that's not unexpected. There's the odd reference to Carter, but otherwise no reason why *Madder Music* shouldn't be set in 1967, or 1957. Swirling is a classic De Vries hero, the guilty sensualist in rebellion against his (Dutch) Calvinist upbringing – and the

Calvinist, as the author (a graduate of Calvin College, who should know) remarks, is 'that Puritan doubled in spades'. He is attracted by the mores of the younger generation, but not at ease with them; he likes adultery (and the pursuit of illicit flesh occupies much of his time), but he likes it old-fashioned; he's a theoretical liberal, who tends to get stomped on by contemptuous blacks; and he has, as women keep reminding him, very little character. *Madder Music* has a passage comparing him to the platypus, that sad amphibian manqué, which is at home neither on land nor in the water.

It kills its water prey and then slinks off with it, stored in cheek pouches, to eat it on dry land, perhaps out of a sense of guilt over the element to which it has been disloyal – certainly out of insecurity of some sort. Its domiciling is equally muddled. The female cohabits in a burrow with her mate but only until it's time to have her young, precisely when one would think an adult male around the house would be welcome, at least as a stabilising factor. But no, off she waddles to lay her eggs in a separate burrow of her own building – leaving the male with still more on his conscience . . .

A similarly unsettling life-pattern awaits the De Vries hero. Here Swirling, browsing in his wife's desk, discovers what seems to be her ready-written funeral tribute to him, remembers his last check-up, and decides he's dying; he philanders, and by the time he discovers he's healthy, his marriage is in ruins; his co-adulterer tells him she was only sleeping with him because she knew *she* was dying; he marries her; she isn't dying either; and so on – no wonder he abandons his own personality. The high artificiality – there's a running (Marxian) motif of hiding in bedroom closets, too – is progressively a feature of late De Vries (moving him nearer to Wodehouse). But even so, the novel survives strongly on set comic scenes and the continuous buzz of cracks, from bitchy characterisation ('Becky, one of those women you don't give a book because they've already got one') to artful play on familiar quotations. De Vries may not be writing books as fierce and close to life as *The Blood of the Lamb* any more; but even in this stylised late phase he can still teach most writers more about comedy than they can handle.

Tom Sharpe for one, whose way with the

reversible phrase makes a glum contrast:

The foxes . . . found it difficult to make ends meet, and brought meets to an end by moving off . . . Lockhart was 18 and it was high time he got shot of the lad before someone got shot by him . . . Just because some fool slices his drive you don't have a drive to slice him and five others with multiple gunshot wounds.

Not so much reversible raglan here, more a grubby Gannex lining. It wouldn't be so bad if such feeble ploys weren't a principal feature of Sharpe's linguistic 'comedy'. 'The matter is in hand,' remarks a husband to his wife; 'it were better it were afoot,' she cracks back. Make 'em laugh? Make 'em cry? There's a medical encyclopedia called Foulter's *Usage and Self-Abusage*, while the literary-reference jokes are this subtle: 'The Dog is father to the man'; '"Somewhere South of Suez," said Mr Plawse whose memory for Kipling was not what it had been.'

Strangely, on the level of plot Mr Sharpe is more competent as a farceur: his tale of an illegitimate member of the squirearchy earning his inheritance by increasingly nasty methods (gassing, suing, whipping, blowing up, killing, stuffing, and so on) is both inventive and pacy. This makes you keep feeling you're somewhere else: watching the Goodies? at a Whitehall farce? somewhere, waiting for Ronnie Barker to come on? Then you remember that what's in front of you is a comic novel. Reading it is like watching a boxer with very fast footwork and very short arms.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Spurling

Corners of Paradise

William Blake Tate Gallery

'An unfortunate lunatic, whose personal inoffensiveness secures him from confinement' was the opinion of Robert Hunt, the solitary critic of Blake's only one-man exhibition in his lifetime. Blake himself, on the other hand, wrote to John Flaxman that 'I am more famed in Heaven for my works than I could well conceive . . . those works are the delight and Study of Archangels'. The exhibition organised by Martin Butlin at the Tate, together with Butlin's catalogue (£1.80 paperback) and two recently-published books, Morton D. Paley's introductory *William Blake* (Phaidon £11.95) and David Bindman's *Blake As An Artist* (Phaidon £9.95), which I reviewed last year but admire even more after a second reading in the light of the exhibition, amount to an almost Archangelic revelation of Blake's visual work. Granted, however, that instead of hiving him off as an eccentric genius we can now accord Blake his rightful place in the Pantheon with Turner and Constable, a problem remains. We are accustomed to judge art for its human qualities, whereas for Blake art was the Christ within us, inseparable from his belief that the material world was to be utterly rejected ('The same half crazy crotchets abot. the two worlds,' as Crabb Robinson complained after his third visit to the seer). Blake was not a religious artist in the sense that Giotto was, or even Michelangelo: he was the prophet of a personally refashioned Christian theology and his mode of prophecy was art.

The difficulty is only partly one of subject-matter. Blake's lack of public recognition in his lifetime – his best-known works were the illustrations to Blair's poem 'The Grave' which, because the publisher considered Blake's engraving technique old-fashioned, were engraved by Schiavonetti after Blake's designs – meant that he was never given the opportunity to paint pictures 'on a scale that is suitable to the grandeur of the nation . . . where the colours would be as pure and as permanent as precious stones, though the figures were one hundred feet in height'. The two pictures he would have liked to paint in this manner, *The Spiritual Form of Nelson guiding Leviathan* and *The Spiritual Form of Pitt guiding Behemoth*, are both in the show and both poor advertisements for his talents in this direction: they have worn badly and their effect is more comic than grand. Blake was supported by those few private patrons who admired him – especially the artists Flaxman and Linnell, Hayley the country gentleman, the Rev. Joseph Thomas and above all that amazing civil servant Thomas Butts, whose house must have been, wall to wall and floor to ceiling, a furnace of Blakes. The oeuvre, then, with a few exceptions,

consists of small tempera paintings, water-colours, prints, drawings and the 15 illuminated books. It is one measure of Blake's peculiar position in the history of Western art that his grandest works are the 12 1½-foot by 2-foot coloured prints – including *Newton*, *Nebuchadnezzar* and *God Judging Adam* – which are all present, hung together, at the centre of this exhibition.

Another part of the difficulty is Blake's contempt for nature. Even if we discount the main English tradition of landscape, we are still hardly prepared by any other artist of Blake's time or since for figures which are so unashamedly superhuman. Grotesques and Gothic fantasies, yes, fairies, smooth neo-classical gods and heroes, historical and Biblical personages, strange beings by Cubism or Surrealism out of Negro or Oceanic carving, but not the naked, muscular, cosmic personifications in action here. The nearest equivalent is Wagner, but Wagner's myth (apart from its almost inevitable visual weakness on stage) seems limited and archaeological compared to Blake's, which combines the Old and New Testaments, Gothic and Renaissance imagery, Milton, the revolutionary events of Blake's period and his own cast of gods, giants, spirits and heroes into a complete account of the Creation, Fall and Redemption of man.

Whether this myth or theology works in its elaborated verbal form in the Prophetic Books is another question; to see this show is to be entirely convinced by its compact visual form. The test is whether one has to make allowances for – consciously suspend disbelief in – figures which are physically human but placed in supernatural predicaments. Confronted with the figure of Albion, balanced on a sloping rock against a flaming sky, arms spread, palms opened sideways and backwards as if to open the picture and the world both ways, or the Ancient of Days stooping out of the sun, or Elohim stretched along the snakebound, crucified body of the awakening Adam, or Satan floating horizontally over the rigid Eve, one hardly feels like quibbling about Nature. Indeed, Blake's images are so immediately powerful that it is easy, without some knowledge of the details of the myth, to misinterpret them. In spite of his wind-blown energy this Jehovah is a figure of despair, this Satan with his superb physique and handsome Georgian aristocrat's face (Sir Percy Blakeney, as it might be) is Opacity, Error and Death. Far from condescending to Blake's idea of the supernatural, we have to stretch our own ideas to keep pace with his.

But although it amply demonstrates the sheer strength of Blake's mythic imagination, the exhibition is most surprising for what it reveals of his development and range. Not by any means all the Prophetic

Books are included (*Milton* is a notable omission) and only *Urizen* and *Jerusalem* are represented by more than five plates. The emphasis is therefore less on Blake's own myth in itself than on the way it interacts with the generally accepted myths he inherited: the Bible, minor but fashionable 'grave' poetry such as Blair's and Young's, *Paradise Lost* and *The Divine Comedy*. At one level Blake never ceases to impose his own corrections on other men's myths, but at another his art seems to flower and expand in response to them. His Bible paintings, for example, develop from the dense temperas, heavily laden with religious intensity and the difficulty of adequately expressing it, to the extraordinary grace and lightness of some of the later water-colours, especially *The Woman Taken in Adultery*. With this fresh, relaxed authority Blake is able to tackle the more complex structures of the Job illustrations and, bringing the Gothic and Neo-Classical traditions into miraculous conjunction, depict such a spiritual-sensuous *Paradise Lost* as even Milton hardly dreamed of. Blake does not so much revert at this stage of his career to painting humans as arrive at a new order of heroic angels among whom humans naturally belong.

The more ordinarily human or at least earthbound side of Blake's art is of course contained in his smallest and perhaps most generally appreciated works – *The Songs of Innocence*, the illustrations to Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* and to Thornton's Virgil. Here is the pastoral sweetness summarised by Samuel Palmer, who inherited it, as 'visions of little dells, and nooks, and corners of Paradise', sheep, flowers, children, pipers and Milton asleep on a bank in his pink Kate Greenaway outfit. In the context of this exhibition, however, it is clear that for Blake it played only an incidental role, though the point would be clearer still if one could compare the poetically languid Milton of the illustrations to the monumental prophetic Milton of Blake's own Prophetic Book, a haloed redeemer casting off his heavenly robe and returning to earth in order to repair the Error wrought by his depiction of Satan.

Blake's own view, as opposed to Palmer's, about 'corners of Paradise' is expressed in one of his illustrations to Dante, *The Lawn with the Kings and Angels*, showing the negligent rulers in Purgatory grouped passively as for a picnic photograph under luscious trees, while angels above force the huge snake coming down the path to turn back on itself. But it is here, in this unfinished set of masterpieces, that one meets the original problem head-on. Blake's illustrations to the *Purgatorio* are so intensely beautiful that one can hardly ask to be conducted further. Blake disapproved of Dante – his doctrine, his Church and his Beatrice – maintaining 'That for Tyrannical Purposes he has made This World the Foundation of All and the Goddess Nature is his Inspirer and not the Holy Ghost'. The plain fact is that standing on the jewelled shore of Purgatory with the figure of Dante and looking across the broad, wonderfully pouring river towards Matilda and Beatrice on the far shore, one is entirely seduced by the Goddess Nature in Blake. If the Holy Ghost meant Blake the prophet to lead us

away from this world, why did he allow Blake the artist to leave so many paintings calculated to reconcile us to it?

Television

Russell Davies

Gwlad Rags

There was not, nor was there expected to be, any more stirring entertainment on the box than the Wales v France rugby game relayed to *Grandstand* (BBC-1) from the Welsh National Stadium. I was glad to see that even the sometimes controversial referee, A. Welsby, distinguished himself. Welsby is partly responsible for making me the strapping specimen I am today (and the strapping is due to come off in a couple of weeks), for he was my gym master for several years. He would sometimes take it into his head to sit down at a piano in the corner of his wall-barred domain to smoke a cigarette and play furtive boogie-woogies while the rest of us did press-ups. For some reason doubtless connected with our middle-class yearning for delinquency, this habit brought him much popularity. It certainly confirmed that it takes all sorts to make an international referee.

Easily the worst feature of Saturday's occasion, mightily though Bill McLaren deplored the inevitable punch-up, was the Welsh singing, which has been deteriorating for some seasons. It is the habit of vocalists overcome by emotion to sing sharp; and it is the habit of Welsh drunks to be overcome by emotion. So when 30,000 Welsh drunks are gathered together before a kick-off, you get a hideous performance like Saturday's National Anthem, which soared a grisly semitone (and among the very ambitious/drunken tenors a nasty fraction more) above the helpless band. This is a serious matter, my compatriots. If we have to delete 'Land of Song' from the tourist brochures, what have we got left but rudimentary cooking and sheep?

The evening when *The BAFTA Awards* (Thames) were presented should have been an occasion for looking back appreciatively at what has been recently worthwhile in TV and films. But the ghastlinesses of the show itself took over, as always. Had I been connected to an embarrassmentometer throughout these very lengthy proceedings, my graph would have rivalled the Dolomites for scenic interest. It was the night of the pink cheeks, and the cold horror-droplets down the spine. The presenters – eek! Andrew Gardner, Thames's Great Bald Hope, was perhaps a possible repro Frank Bough; but Susannah York, a nice lady and a good bet on the face of it, had a disastrous evening, beginning at home, where she had chosen to come out in a Jane Austen squeeze-busted peignoir. One kept expecting Gardner to slip a fatherly mac around her shoulders. Positively starched with nerves, anyway, she hectored and goofed her way through the nominations in the kind of voice

that leaves even the chandeliers unsafe.

Moreover, somebody had decided that these two would make a good comedy team, so they burst at several points into an extremely unconversational cross-talk act. The material was bad, but it could have been done with more lightness and aplomb by a pair of station announcers working from opposite ends of Paddington. In one of the many stunned silences, Gardner, to his credit, owned up. 'Enough', he said, 'of what was supposed to be wonderful material.' Everybody fell about with relief, although realising in their hearts that Gardner had, in nearly saving the day, made it all explicitly worse.

When a ceremony goes as badly as this, of course, it's harder than ever to take the awards themselves seriously. What right have the people running this fiasco, you think, to give prizes to anyone else? The night teetered on, the peaks on my graph clustering ever more closely. A brief plateau or col was reached when the Muppets appeared: Fozzie Bear and Kermit the Frog, who had the courage to say what everybody was thinking about Miss York's attire ('that's a very attractive *thing* you're wearing'), should obviously have been in charge from the start. They might have saved Donald O'Connor from himself a little earlier than he did. He was well into a reminiscence of his screen triumphs when Gardner's Impulse held him back: 'Anyway,' he chirped, 'we're not here to talk about me and my wonderful accomplishments'. No, we weren't; but between us we managed to devalue pretty thoroughly the wonderful accomplishments we *were* there to talk about.

Télé-Journal (BBC-2) is an excellent addition to the schedules. For my own part, I would like to see a foreign news pro-

This English

After the yob's comma, the nob's pronoun (does 'I' really sound so much posher than 'me'? Many quite literate people incorrectly favour 'I' in conversation, but methinks they'd better avoid it in their prose). We round off the week with four rogue apostrophes. £3 for first entry, £2 for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ The aim of Leslie Bricusse's show seems to be to demonstrate that every king is actually a clown, and Henry VIII an ordinary bloke with six wives or a kingdom just like you or I. **Robert Cushman** *Observer* (R. S. Fraser)

☐ Even as I write, a letter drops on my desk, proclaiming it's author's outrage at the praise which I had 'lavished on . . .'. **Peter Fiddick** *Guardian* (D. P. Maw)

☐ Cradled in a grand amphitheatre of hills, it's setting is striking, although the harbour beach is disappointing. **Sebastian Cash** *Guardian* (Colin Knight)

☐ The Post-Colonial State and Its' Tanzanian Version. **Headline Review of African Political Economy** (Michael Athin)

☐ Behind closed ego's. **Headline** *Sunday Times* (J. Redman)

gramme – French, German, Italian, Dutch – every night of the week in this late slot on 2, but I suppose the expense would be prodigious. An extra edition on Sunday night, anyhow, gave us some of the election coverage from TFI, and it was comforting to note that the French are just as weighed down with graphics and barometers as Bob McKenzie. One habit they have that our election-coverers might consider copying is that of attaching photographs of elected candidates to the caption registering their win. It is awful to think that large sections of our own populace may not be able to distinguish, physically, between, to take but one example, Mr Nigel Lawson and Mr Dennis Skinner.

Films

John Coleman

Black and Red

1900 (X) *Classic Complex, Oxford Street*

Saturday Night Fever (X) *Empire*

Another Man, Another Woman (AA) *Star Studio; Swiss Scene*

The 12 Tasks of Asterix (U) *ABC 1, Shaftesbury Avenue*

Bernardo Bertolucci's *1900*, then running at something over five and a half hours, was first shown at Cannes two years ago. Word has it that it embarrassed Hollywood, which had backed it to the tune of \$6.5 m. and found it too long and political, and the Italian CP, which worried about the crudity of a finale embracing dancing peasants under a giant red patchwork flag. Bertolucci disclaimed a subsequent 190-minute version and settled to the cut of his own doing – four hours and a bit, split into two Acts – now bedded down at the Classic. The sprawling, high-lit story covers three generations of a pair of families, the landowning Berlinghieris and the landworking Dalcos, living in the director's native province of Emilia. If nothing else, this return to roots has brought a magnificent bonus in Vittorio Storaro's photography of the countryside near Parma: hardly a frame, notably in the opening scenes, that isn't saturated with a sense of rural abundance, past rhythms. Born on the same day in the brand-new century, outgoing young Olmo, the peasant's son, and the more cautious Alfredo strike up a clumsy, deep but circumscribed friendship. In a film where symbols abound, the wiggling frogs round the barefoot boy's hat will naturally be spewed up by the landowner's son at dinner. Two teak-like patriarchs, physically marvellous in Burt Lancaster and Sterling Hayden, are the last of their breed, ruling their different roosts as master and man; and their deaths (Lancaster hanging himself in the cow-shed after a last despairing sexual bid with a milkmaid, Hayden falling into a posture of sleep by a tree) presage social changes.

Faking the old man's will, Alfredo's father cuts out a dissipated absentee

brother, Ottavio, and proceeds to shake the whip at his labourers. Taunted, beyond bounds when a hailstorm has ruined the crops, a peasant slices off his own ear. Bertolucci, on one of his many admissions, intended a melodrama (hence the two Acts and an operatic opening when the hunch-backed local clown bemoans the death of Verdi): much of the central action takes place in a great courtyard or arena, frequented by the workers, the erstwhile home of miracle plays. This deliberate staging of set-pieces, at times reminiscent of the Hungarian director-choreographer Miklós Jancsó in its manipulation of massed or processing bodies to the accompaniment of political songs, is to reach its climax near the end, but it has been a simplistic or emblematic nuisance long before then. Grown to manhood, Olmo (Gérard Depardieu) and Alfredo (Robert de Niro) stay uneasy brothers beneath the skin, sharing a bad frolic with an epileptic laundry girl, going their separate ways elsewhere. Olmo fights in World War I while Alfredo stays at home in officer's rig; Olmo becomes a political activist while Alfredo plays at marriage and managing the estate; come Liberation Day, 1945, and Olmo returns in triumph, bravest of the partisans, while Alfredo is tried in that courtyard, found guilty and set free, living proof of the padrone's new impotence.

Bertolucci contrives a handful of stunningly conceived occasions, as one might expect of the creator of *The Conformist* and *The Spider's Stratagem* – evil Attila (Donald Sutherland baring long, long teeth) as the new Fascist bailiff, butting a cat to pulp to put iron into his wavering Black-shirts; a village hop at which the capricious Futurist Ada (Dominique Sanda) pretends to be blind, merely irritating the polite locals; the wedding of Alfredo and Ada, where several strands of politics – both national and domestic – are cruelly woven together. Perversely, in this reduced rendering of his original concept at least, it is the dark or decadent side of mankind that shows Bertolucci at fullest inventive stretch: there is a playing-truant lightheartedness when gay old uncle Ottavio, Ada and Alfredo sniff cocaine together and engage in loopy mock-ballet (later, Ottavio's wedding present is a white horse called Cocaine) that is almost absent from the larger context. A more crucial absence might be that of any profound sense of history itself: two cataclysmic wars, the complex rise of Fascism – other than via Attila's increasing beastliness and importance – are left cooling their heels in the wings. 1900 falls among several milking stools: its incidental pleasures are many, its insights sadly few.

John Badham's *Saturday Night Fever*, currently cleaning up in the States as the latest sleeper, starts off engagingly as a new Italian American heart-throb, John Travolta of the long chin and puffy upper lip, springs and strut-bounces down the street to Bee Gees music. He's Tony, paint store employee in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, by day and king of the '2001' disco at weekends, a quite decent stud who describes himself as a shit, most utterly himself when dancing to the loud, loud beat. Norman Wexler wrote the shrewd, funny, foul-mouthed script, not without many a sidelong glance towards US youth, *American Graffiti* and *Rocky*: Tony

has blow-ups of Al Pacino and Stallone on his bedroom walls and maybe Wexler had, too, for the duration. A family quarrel results in round-the-table slaps. 'He hit my hair,' protests Tony, his dance-shirt already swathed in a sheet against spaghetti sauce. 'Hey, Tony, can I wipe off your forehead?' breathes a female fan at the disco.

There is a subplot like a leftover from *West Side Story* and a runty member of Tony's crowd falls madly from a bridge; there is also a seamy little gang-bang. When not bowing to such conventions, the movie has its exhilarating moments, most finely in an up-down-up relationship between the hero and Stephanie (Karen Lynn Gorney), a local chick painfully trying to better herself. And there are a couple of dance-hall sequences (notably a sort of formation rock number) that nearly reconciled me to the noise. Fans of this stuff, lots of Bee Gees and a naughty item called *A Fifth of Beethoven*, will enjoy, anyway.

Claude Lelouch's *Another Man, Another Woman* is a disaster area; alternatively, it is another of his commercials – for true love finding its difficult path in the old West of the 1870s – masquerading as a real, grown-up motion picture. The camera weaves mazelike at some distance from the principals, amiable James Caan as a widowed vet, misspent Genevieve Bujold as a widowed French photographer. Caan's dialogue is so spaced out you can nap between rejoinders and all's veiled under hazy yellow-amber filters. Five jokes to the side, the *Asterix* animation disappoints, one character unforgivably admitting, 'It's just a movie.' Only just.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Mainlining

**Withdrawal Symptoms ICA
Class Enemy Theatre Upstairs**

In an ideal world a dramatist's pen would no doubt express what his mind thought and his mind think what his eyes saw and his heart felt; but this is very far from an ideal world, and such instances of perfect integration are not all that numerous. In fact, this has been one of those weeks when the boys have tended to serve up what principle told them they should write rather than what experience insisted was the truth. Take *Withdrawal Symptoms*, which is by C. P. Taylor, one of the most woefully undervalued playwrights in Britain and, I should perhaps add, a personal favourite of mine. He has set himself the task of explaining why an exceedingly well-educated girl – a university lecturer, no less – should become a junkie, and a junkie so dedicated that she's presently serving a prison sentence for possession in a peculiarly Spartan rehabilitation centre. And what has propelled her into this pit? Well, the main trouble is that she comes from a long line

of colonial exploiters and FO wangers, and most immediately from a father who is partly responsible for the extinction of the Ibos in what used to be called Biafra. Her addiction is part protest against the family tree that has wrapped her, like Sycorax, in its trunk, and part symbol, because her time inside the cankered bark has clearly crippled her. Or so she says, and Taylor seems to want to believe it.

I couldn't credit a word of this, though that may, admittedly, be partly for reasons other than the value of Mr Taylor's genetic ideas. For instance, Mary Maddox's playing of the main part is more precious, more dainty, more girlishly genteel than even a diplomatic background would warrant. She throws out four-letter words as if she were passing them with a lacrosse stick, and, more to the point, she shows little physical or mental sign of having persistently mainlined herself to oblivion. Again, the play is so patently in need of trimming and tightening that I had some difficulty restraining myself from leaping onstage and personally running my blue pencil over the cast, like a maniac tattooist. But the real trouble is that Taylor, being Taylor, is much more plausible when he's resisting fads, theories and abstract principles than when he's conscientiously projecting them. For instance, he completely confirms my suspicion that the ultimate argument against succumbing to insanity is that you might be obliged to join an encounter group. He is devastatingly funny about such rituals and yet, at the same time, sentient enough to note the pain and fear that camouflages itself in shrill appeals to 'open up', 'drop your mask' and 'stop blocking your growth'. Antony Milner's group bully-boy, noisome, truculent and finally tearful, is especially well conceived and acted. But a connection between our wicked imperialist past and the heroin in our contemporary bloodstream? I couldn't see it, and I'm not sure Mr Taylor could either.

Of course, there's much about the backstreets of Streatham, Clapham and Brixton to sharpen a principled indignation against our rulers. South London is where Taylor places his dry-cleaners for addicts, and also where Nigel Williams has planted the comprehensive school of his *Class Enemy*. This thrusts us deep inside the blackboard jungle, into the room where 5K festers, waiting hopefully for the arrival of a teacher whom it will then be its pleasure to persecute. No one actually turns up, though, leaving both the boys and Mr Williams with a vacuum to fill. But how? Well, the most dominant and aggressive, one Iron, has an idea. Each pupil must step forward and give a five-minute lesson. Accordingly, one maunders on about sex, another about how to make puddings out of stale bread, a third about the difficulty of growing flowers in a grotty wilderness of council flats, a fourth about being black in white Britain. Finally Iron himself delivers a graphically illustrated homily in favour of violence. 'You should be worrying about raisins when there's cunts in Chelsea throwing away steak?' he snarls, as he hurls the embryo cook's ingredients round the classroom. 'Is that justice?'

Is that truth? Mr Williams's play slouches into life often enough, though he rarely

achieves effects as vivid as Barry Keefe, the dramatist who has made a clinical speciality of the yob, the hooligan, the adolescent no-hoper. The problem is that he feels a need to editorialise about the society that can tolerate the existence of a 5K, and this obliges him to twist some of his characters' behaviour and speech into unnatural patterns. He should have trusted his audiences to draw their own conclusions from the pugnacious backchat – 'we 'ad a geezer told us about Mark Antony and Cleopatra, only we 'it 'im wiv an 'ammer before he could finish' – and from the stony contempt of the one adult who briefly ventures into this academic ape-house. As it is, we have Iron complaining of being 'part of the waste-disposal system', sarcastically shouting 'an idea, a theory' at a racist chum, and knowingly remarking, 'let 'em eat cake, eh?', as if his macho nickname had a 'y' tacked after it. The recalcitrant pupil is, at root, a sermonising pedagogue, and it just doesn't add up.

Music

Andrew Clements

Prime Mover

Berio Smith Square

Berio conducts Berio RCA Red Seal £3.99

Consistent composers are usually the least interesting; if they have settled for turning out the well-made and unenterprising there seems little point in bothering with them. We should at least expect every new piece of music to be a masterpiece – if the listener is mentally prepared to accept the second best the composer is implicitly downgraded. In Luciano Berio's recent music there's a suspicion of his having given up the attempt to extend his horizons; technique now sustains what original thought cannot. Yet as one of the prime movers in the post-war European avant garde – to be bracketed with Stockhausen, Boulez, Pousseur and Nono – Berio demands our attention.

The all-Berio concert conducted by John Lubbock at Smith Square formed a very useful introduction to the range and limitation of his achievement: two works, *Laborintus II* and *Cries of London*, involving Swingle II (collaborators with Berio since their formation), and two that illustrate Berio's abiding love of folksong and his vital response to it – the 1963 *Folksongs* and the new *De Falla Songs*, an orchestration of Manuel de Falla's Seven Spanish Folksongs commissioned by the Smith Square Orchestra. *Laborintus II* seems to me a very substantial achievement. A homage to Dante completed in 1965, it's centred on texts from *La Vita Nuova*, *La Divina Commedia* and *Il Convivio*. The texts are explored by Joycean association, assembling a musical collage involving chunks of Pound (the Canto on usury) and Eliot (*Burnt Norton* and *East Coker*). The main texts are spoken by a narrator, while the eight

singers pick up and throw around odd syllables and phrases or simply run through their vocal doodlings; the orchestra moves between Berio's own idiom and free jazz improvisation, while the second half of the work is dominated by a pre-recorded tape.

Berio handles this *mélange* with great felicity, yet here and in subsequent works he has never satisfactorily solved the problem of structuring the musical collage. In the slightly later *Sinfonia*, the problem is sidestepped by building the movement on an existing musical structure. As well as being part of the collage the scherzo of Mahler's Second Symphony provides an easily recognised framework upon which the other musical and verbal fragments can be superimposed. In *Coro*, the paean to folksong heard at last year's Proms, the failure to find a structure is the work's downfall: the ear eventually despairs of finding a way through the amorphous mass. But in *Laborintus II* the failure to provide a thoroughgoing plan actually enhances the work's effect; the progression from the clearly defined arch-form of the first part to the almost inchoate third part, in which the music is almost entirely articulated by the electronic tape, mirrors the emphasis of the text, first on Dante's early years, finally on the chaos of the *Inferno*. Here there is a freshness and energy entirely absent among the chic surfaces of the later collage works; if there is a fault it is the indulgence in Swingle-type vocalisations. They suggest a slickness quite out of keeping with the obviously profound aspirations of the work.

In the *Cries of London* (written in 1974), however, the dichotomy between the subject matter (London street cries) and the musical handling is even more pronounced. The rawness of the originals is completely neutralised by the glossy packaging. Compositional technique has taken over; the words of the cries themselves merely variegates the surface of the music while Swingle II work their way through a compendium of vocal tricks – an updated, close-miked *bel canto*. Clearly fascinated by the ambiguity between the instrumental and vocal sounds they produce, Berio could manipulate these resources *ad infinitum* and shows every sign of doing so, though in *Coro* he was perhaps trying to extend them by using a choir and orchestra who sit together, so blurring all the distinctions.

If there is any sign of life in Berio's recent music it is in some of the smaller-scale instrumental works that appear on his latest disc from RCA. It contains one oddity from Berio's pre-serial days, a Concertino for flute and violin which is an essay in Stravinskian neoclassicism. Of the newer pieces, *Chemins IV* is a tasteful reworking for oboe and strings of a previous piece for solo oboe, *Linea* an effective ballet score for two pianos, vibraphone and marimba, which introduces and gradually transforms and expands a basic theme. *Points on the curve to find . . .* is the strongest work on the record and the most impressive recent piece of his I've heard. An unrelenting toccata for piano is attacked and eventually overcome by woodwind and brass; the scheme is simple but exciting and the use of material ingenious. Perhaps Berio is too talented a composer to be satisfied with second best for long.

Weekend Competition

No 2507

Set by E. O. Parrott

If clerihews come, can limericks be far behind? This time, however, the locations must be fictional: Illyria, Barchester, Lilliput, the Slough of Despond. Three limericks per entrant max. By 7 April.

Result of No 2504 Set by C. Vita Finzi

What if Charmian had had some snake-bite serum, or if Anna K. had called the Samaritans? You were required to rewrite any famous scene in the light of socio-technological developments.

Report

by Fat Jeff

A delightful opportunity for you to let your sense of anachronism out to play. Oliver Twist bound over to an enlightened children's home (the man 'wore a beard, faded jeans and sandals without socks' – Tim Hopkins), Paulina getting a test to assuage Leontes's doubts ('Nay, hear me, sire, / Its blood group is attested like to yours' – M. G. Cormack), the Lady of Shallot briskly unravelling her curse ('I'll fix the glass-with Uhu Glue, / For Bring & Buy the web will do' – Peter Sheldon): oh, you had yourselves a time, no error. Hardly had the comp casket been emptied at his curtained feet when Mr Keats's silhouetted fingers snapped six times. I rode the scenic elevator (with blood trickling out of my ears) and sent as many green ones on their way to each of the winners. At my own discretion I shall send a derisory £1 to T. H., M. G. C. and P. S.

The Joy of Mothers

MESSANGER (From Messrs. Sidgwick and Jackson):

A father butchered, mother bedded, plus
A bevy of incestuous brats – why fuss
O'er that, thou royal dolt? Canst thou not see,
In all this coil, bright Opportunity?

OEDIPUS: (*Not listening*)

To put my errant eyes out I am minded.

MESSANGER:

Thou canst not sign a single copy blinded!

The story of thy life's already ghosted –
Printed, published. Hither I have posted
With twice ten thousand books to stock

the urgent train.
Come, pluck thy finger out – there's no
time to explain!

(*Oedipus, sunk in semi-catatonia, cravenly complies*).

ANDREW MCEVOY

The Othello Caper

I turned out the light, took a fat finger of cheap bourbon from the squat ugly glass, tipped further back into the swivel chair and studied the bejewelled Italian night. I pushed the hat from my forehead and let the scalp breathe in the smog blowing off the canals. The Othello caper was over. I looked out the window. Sweetheart, you can't sink fast enough for me. The big black guy a plant of the Ugandan meglo; Cassio the northern end of Cosa Nostra drugs; Iago a turncoat fronting Irish linen and contraceptives; and that little floozie Desdemona hitting the club scene with Emilia (two girls and a handkerchief, little deaths twice nightly). Even Hockney couldn't limn this. I'd investigated too well. Let the client use it any way he wants, I'm clamping up now.

ROY KELLY

A Trip to India

She lost Aziz and Adela in the dark, didn't know who touched her, couldn't breathe, and some vile naked thing struck her face and settled on her mouth like a pad. Then, without an interval, the cave blinked into light. Mrs Moore shivered with pleasure at the sight of the little stalls, each with a gay strip of advertisement, that sprang into life beneath white neon cylinders. India threw at her its secret heart: postcards and slides, Tandoori chickens fiercely blushing in a microwave oven, paperbacks and paperweights. She felt like a child, giggling at its own superstitions. How could she lift a hand to choose?

'Please Mrs Moore,' said Aziz, his hand still on the switch, 'Here are such interesting souvenirs. You must now oblige me by choosing; I, of course, shall cough up.'

BASIL RANSOME

Manana

Macbeth: Wherefore was that cry?

Seyton: The queen, my lord, is waked.

Macbeth: You mean she's cured?

Seyton: Indeed, her doctor that observed

her sighs,
Her strange insistence that some spots
of blood

Prevented her from having forty winks,
Kip that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care,
This doctor hath sent out to Dunsinane
To Boots for downers. These administered,
She slept this fortnight. She's much

better now.

Macbeth: She should have died. Hereafter
There would have been a time for just

a word

From me between her nagging.

'Hubby, please,
Oh, just one murder more.' It never stops.
Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow
I'll have to hear her whining. Bloody hell.

I thought I said 'Throw physic to the dogs'?

Seyton: I did, my lord. They too have

woke refreshed.

BILL GREENWELL

The Barg She Sat In

Charmian: What hast thou there?

Cleopatra: The certain instrument of
my undoing (*Undoes bra*)

Now shalt thou see the serpent of old Nile

Another serpent to her bosom take;

A mother once, a mummy soon to be.

(Applies asp to breast)

Char.: What dreadful jest is this?

Cleo.: When I am dead, good wench, thou
canst explain
How on this very couch was Cleo lain.

Char.: Nay, nay - I have a sov'reign remedy.

Cleo.: 'Tis very apt. A sov'reign remedy. Ha!

Char.: A simple, madam, highly spoken of,
Made to an old Egyptian recipe,
With locusts, bitter herbs and camel dung,
One guaranteed to cure all mortal ills,
Snake-bites and boils and other
royal distempers,

Jaundice, pimples, the plague - thou
namest it.

(Applies serum to affected area)

Cleo.: 'Tis magic, sure; the sting abates already.

So shall I live to fight another day,
And - the gods willing - in another play.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS



Tony Miles

Chess

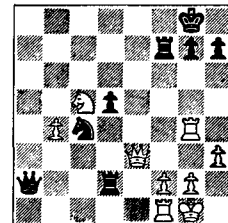
No 76

January Problems

The January problems included two very interesting positions. **Problem 65** (5n2/8/8/4p3/4P2k/8/8/3R3K) is a study. The main line of the solution is 1. K-N2, K-N5; 2. R-Q6! N-R2; 3. K-B2! K-B5; 4. R-KR6, N-N4; 5. R-R4 mate. (I should point out that 'winning' the pawn by 1. R-Q8, N-K3; 2. R-K8, N-N4; 3. R x P only draws after K-N5; 4. R-K8, K-B5; 5. P-K5, K-B4 and N-K3). However, Messrs Sahasrabudhe and Deshmukh seem to have fudged the study with 1. K-N2, K-N5; 2. R-KR1! with the following variations: (a) 2. . . . N-N3; 3. K-B2, K-B5; 4. R-R6! K-N4 (if N-K2; 5. R-R4ch and K-N3); 5. R-R7! K-B5 (else K-K3); 6. R-KN7! N-R5 (if K-N4; 7. K-K3 or N-R1; 7. R-N8, N-B2; 8. R-KB8); 7. R-N8! (or K-K2) Zugzwang! K x P; 8. R-N4ch wins. (b) 2. . . . N-K3; 3. K-B2, K-B5; 4. R-R4ch, K-N4; 5. K-N3 and wins. (c) 2. . . . N-Q2; 3. K-B2, K-B5 and now 4. R-R7! N-B3 (or N-B4, R-R4ch); 5. R-KB7! K-N4; 6. K-K3 winning but not 4.

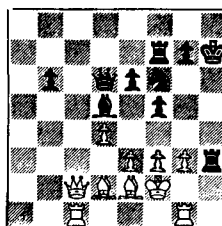
R-R4ch, K-N4; 5. K-N3, N-B3; 6. K-R3 when 6. . . . K-N3 draws (7. K-N2, K-N4; 8. K-N3, N-R4ch etc).

Problem 68, see board, was taken from an old Gligoric game which I have frequently seen published as white missing a quick mate (by 1. R x Pch). However, my analysis was also not completely accurate. 1. Q-K8ch (as played) is by far the simplest conclusion: 1. . . . R-B1; 2. Q-K7! (more accurate than R x Pch) and if 2. . . . R-B2; 3. R x Pch or 2. . . . Q-N7 or 2. . . . P-N3; 3. N-K6 (or Q7). I was more interested in the analysis of 1. R x Pch, and



this also turns out to be a win: 1. R x Pch, K-R1! 2. R-N8ch! K x R; 3. Q-N5ch, R-N2; 4. Q-Q8ch, K-B2; 5. Q-Q7ch, K-N3; 6. Q-K6ch, K-N4; 7. P-R4ch! K-R4 (or K x P; 8. Q-R6ch and Q x Rch); 8. Q-B5ch, K-R3 (if 8. . . . K x P; 9. P-N3ch, R x P; 10. P x Rch, K x P; 11. R-B3ch; K-R5; 12. R-R3 mate); 9. P-N4! (this was the move I overlooked in my original analysis) and black cannot avoid mate: 9. . . . R-N3; 10. Q-B8ch, R-N2; 11. Q-B4ch, K-N3; 12. P-R5 mate.

My congratulations to Mr I. Kastanas on being the only entrant to solve this completely, and thanks to J. D. Taylor for pointing it out later. First prize in the January competition to Mr Kastanas (£15) ahead of Messrs Sobey and Abrahams, with consolation prizes to Messrs Neelakantan, Taylor and Marshall.



Problem 76

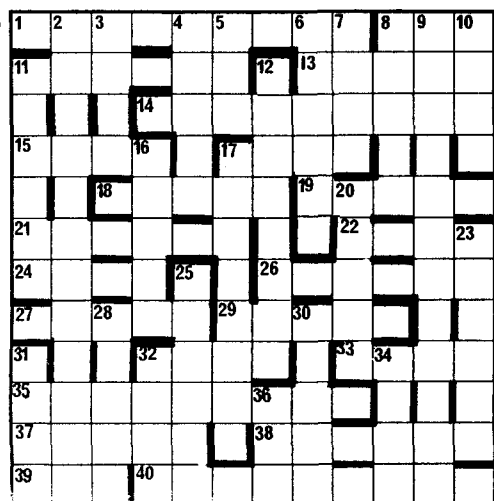
Black to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN post-marked not later than 5 April.

Solution to Problem 74

1. R-Q7 (just in case N-K2 is a possible defence 1. R(Q)-Q6 fails to N-B5ch; 2. K-N4, N x B; 3. K x R, P-R6! R-QR1 (forced); 2. K-K2! N-B5 (otherwise R(Q)-Q6); 3. R-Q8, R-QR2; 4. B-B1, R-Q4; 5. R-QN8! and black is completely tied up. In most lines white mates by something like 5. . . . N-Q6; 6. P-R3! (intending B x N and P x P mate) P x P; 7. R-B4! N-N7; 8. R-R4ch! N x R; 9. P-N4 mate.

Salamanca 4: 'Vegetable Crackers'

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to *Salamanca 4*, *New Statesman*, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 4 April.



Each clue is a cryptic definition consisting of two words, beginning with the same letter. The solver should recognise. Every clue has an answer in Chambers 1977.

ACROSS

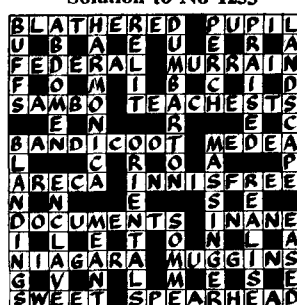
8. Step back into a trench (3)
14. Scribe's position in animated tea-circle (9)
15. What Jamie has as odd could fill 'im with —, say? (4)
17. Rifle - or three, perhaps, with the second missing (4)
18. Rogue elephants having grey pelt (5)
19. These commanders are most stupefied (5)
24. You find it about in the Himalayan snows (4)
26. Lion - and the prey one sort swallows - in adjunctive shelter (6)
27. First reader one delves into? One's children count on them (5)
32. He's supposed to have discovered the runes with no commotion? (4)
33. An opening some children tear (4)
37. During Sunday to Saturday you've a very small break at the end (5)
38. Litter for dead, carried with care by Scots (6)
39. It crowns all eventually, never defied (3)
40. Am I like a kangaroo, for instance, making tiny sac madly wobble? (9)

DOWN

3. The lady's King, Lord and Master (4)
4. Mohammedan lord having change of heart to staff of Indian officials (5)
5. I sound this entrance of mine (3)
6. Like Dante's Inferno - one entering hellish place (6)
7. The stress experienced when given this barred grid? (4)
8. Hide away - like Joan of Arc after her martyrdom? (5)
9. Like the thrilling sensations you get following a wanton tart about, who's behaving thus? (12)
10. 'Macpie' Prince crowns before the affair is over (4)
16. When most gather lavender (5)
17. When wrinkles crop up and, what's a matter for regret, head goes (8)
20. Most look fierce, getting in middle of mud - this, in Glasgow (5)
23. Anyone taking your bairn is? (6)
25. Halfway to heaven? (6)
28. Certain purgative drugs are one's to dole out (5)

30. Have nape of neck bare in France and fellow won't finish touching it! (5)
31. Jock and Jamie, for instance, sorrowful after time (4)
32. 'Omnes eodem cogimur' one of them's containing (4)
34. Flint pieces said to be of this island? (4)
36. 'Extra rum!' - uprising the same day (3)

Solution to No 1255



Prizewinners to No 1255

David Linnell (Ilford)
Miss M. B. Jameson (Ilfley)
J. E. Roberts (Cannock)

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Theatres

ALDWYCH 836 6404. Info. 836 5332. Royal Shakespeare Company. No perfs until 4 April. Public booking in person or telephone now open for new London season of Shakespeare's 'Henry V' and 'Henry VI' plays from Stratford. Box Office open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (closed Good Friday, Easter Saturday and Monday). RSC's new Warehouse season at The Donmar Theatre opens 10 April. Book now in person, by post or telephone (01-836 6808).

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NATIONAL THEATRE, 928 2252. No perfs 24 March. 'The Country Wife', 'The Plough and the Stars', 'The Cherry Orchard', 'The Lady from Maxim's', 'The Guardsman', 'Lark Rise' & 'Love Letters on Blue Paper'. See daily press for dates & times or ring recorded info. 928 2256.

ROYAL COURT, 730 1745. No perfs 24 Mar. Last perfs Sat. 5 & 8.30. David Truck In 'A Bed of Roses'. From 4 April eyes 8. Sats 5 & 8.30 'Class Enemy' by Nigel Williams.

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BRITISH-YUGOSLAV SOCIETY SEMINAR on Yugoslav Constitutional Developments & International Relations. Chelsea College, London. Sat. afternoon - Sun. a.m. 15/16 April. Speakers: Sir Duncan Wilson, formerly Ambassador Belgrade & Moscow; Prof. Balsa Spadijer of Belgrade University; Fred Singleton, Chairman Post-grad. School of Yugoslav Studies, Bradford; Vladislav Jovanovic, Minister-Counsellor Yugoslav Embassy. Places available if you apply before 30 March. Fee £15 (BYS members £10). Includes lunch both days. Details & application forms from Secretary, British-Yugoslav Society, 5 Court House, Basil St, London SW3. 01-589 5276.

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